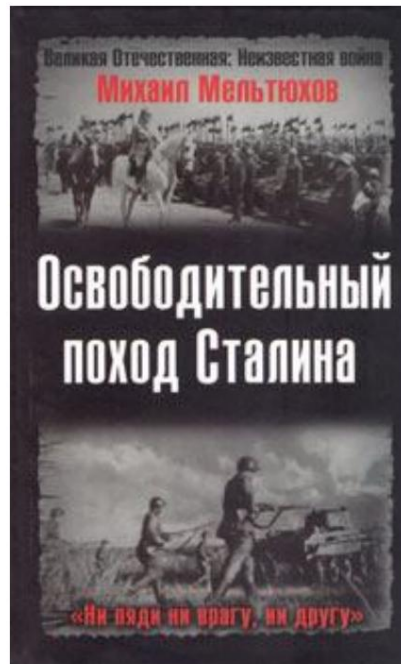


Stalin's liberation campaign

Mikhail Meltyukhov Son



Introduction

Not a span to either enemy or friend! N.M. Karamzin

Like most other regions of the Earth, Bessarabia - as the territory located between the Dniester, Prut, Danube and the Black Sea was called since the 19th century - has experienced many drastic changes in its history. Replacing each other, the Cimmerians, Scythians, Sarmatians, Getae, Celts and Carps lived there, the southern part of the region was part of the Roman Empire for some time, the state of the Goths was here, the Huns passed, the Bulgarians, Avars, Hungarians, Pechenegs and Cumans roamed along the rivers Slavs settled. The interfluvium of the Prut and the Dniester was part of Kievan Rus, its northern part - in the Galicia-Volyn principality. From the 13th century these areas belonged to the Golden Horde, and then, in the second half of the 14th century, fell into vassalage from Hungary.

Gradually, between the Carpathians and the Dniester, the Moldavian principality was formed, which included the northern part of Bessarabia, which in 1359-1365. freed from Hungarian dependence. As the Golden Horde weakened, the southern regions of the Prut-Dniester interfluvium from the beginning of the 15th century. became part of the principality, which since 1387 became a vassal of Poland. Only the mouth of the Danube with the port of Chilia located here remained the scene of a fierce struggle between Genoa and Venice, and then between Moldavia and Wallachia. In 1465, the Moldavian ruler Stefan III the Great finally entrenched himself in Chilia. Meanwhile, the strengthening of the Ottoman Empire led to the fact that since 1456 the Moldavian principality became its tributary. Moreover, the dependence gradually increased, and the attempt to get rid of the Turkish tribute, undertaken in 1473-1478, failed. During the outbreak of the war, the part of the interfluvium of the Prut and Dniester (Budzhak) with Kiliya and Akkerman adjoining the Black Sea in 1484 was annexed to Turkish possessions. Since 1478, the Moldavian Principality resumed paying tribute to the Ottoman Empire, and since 1501 it became its vassal, retaining internal autonomy. Later, at the end of the 16th - beginning of the 17th century, certain regions of Bessarabia with centers in Tighina (Bender), Izmail, Reni and Khotyn were annexed to the Ottoman Empire, becoming a kind of outposts of Turkish rule in the region. The relations of the Moldavian Principality with Russia were mainly ecclesiastical and occasionally dynastic in nature (in particular, the son of Ivan III was married to the daughter of Stephen III the Great). Only in the middle of the XVII century. With the

reunification of Ukraine with Russia, the Moldavian rulers decided to use contacts with Moscow to free themselves from the Ottoman Empire. In February 1654, an ambassador was sent to Russia with a request to accept Moldavia into Russian citizenship. The Russian government supported this idea, negotiations began on the conditions under which the principality was ready to become part of Russia. However, the Russian-Polish and Russian-Swedish wars did not allow these plans to be realized. In 1674, Moldova again asked Russia for help in liberation from Ottoman domination and entry into Russian citizenship. In the then international situation, Moscow took a cautious position, although it promised some military assistance. New appeals to Moscow followed in 1684 and 1698.

Meanwhile, Russia was increasingly drawn into the struggle with the Ottoman Empire for access to the Black Sea, which

contributed to the preservation of the pro-Russian orientation of the Moldovan elite. In 1711, Peter I offered the Moldavian ruler D. Cantemir a "Diploma and points", according to which the Moldavian principality was accepted into Russian citizenship, and the throne of the rulers was assigned to the Cantemir family. However, the failure of the Prut campaign did not allow the implementation of this agreement, and the Moldavian Principality actually lost its autonomy. Subsequent Russo-Turkish Wars of 1735–1739 and 1769–1774 were also carried out on the territory of Moldova, strengthening Russian influence in the Carpatho-Danube region. At the same time, the influence of the Austrian Empire was growing in the Balkans, jealously following the successes of the Russian troops on the Danube and providing diplomatic support to the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, when in 1770 Moldova again turned to St. Petersburg with a request to establish a Russian protectorate over the principality, Russia had to limit itself to the promise of patronage to the Danube principalities, which was secured in the Kyuchuk-Kaynardzhy Russian-Turkish peace treaty of 1774. Accordingly, the Moldavian elite continued offer St. Petersburg to take Moldova into Russian citizenship with the preservation of a certain autonomy. In May 1775, the Austrian Empire obtained from Istanbul the transfer of the north-western part of the Moldavian

principality - Bukovina, to it for neutrality in the past Russian-Turkish war. In 1779, Russian consulates general were established in the Danubian principalities, which supervised the fulfillment by the Ottoman Empire of its obligations in relation to these territories. Gradually, Russian diplomacy managed to achieve the formalization of the autonomy of the principalities and its expansion. As a result of the Russian-Turkish war of 1787-1791. Russia received the left bank of the lower reaches of the Dniester and became a direct neighbor of the Moldavian Principality, whose elite did not stop turning to St. Petersburg with requests for help and patronage. New Russo-Turkish War of 1806–1812 exacerbated the question of the fate of the Danubian principalities occupied by Russian troops. Local authorities again asked to be accepted into Russian citizenship. On September 30 (October 12), 1808, Alexander I obtained from Napoleon I a written consent to the annexation of these territories to Russia. However, the Russian-Turkish peace negotiations that began in 1809 showed that Istanbul was in no hurry to agree that "the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, together with Bessarabia, join the All-Russian Empire forever, so that from now on the Danube River will remain the border between the All-Russian Empire and the Ottoman Port.

The deterioration of Russian-French relations required an end to the war with the Ottoman Empire. The victory of the Russian army near Slobodzeya revived the negotiations, especially since Russia decided to moderate its demands "by one Moldavia with Bessarabia. If the Turkish ministers find it extremely difficult to cede the entire principality, then be content with defining the border along the Seret River, continuing it along the Danube until it flows into the Black Sea. But still, Istanbul refused the agreement. Then on March 22 (April 3), 1812, Alexander I notified the commander of the Russian troops on the Danube, General of Infantry M.I. Kutuzov about the possibility, in the most extreme case, "to make peace by laying the Prut, at its confluence with the Danube, by the border." As a result, on May 16 (28), 1812, a peace treaty was signed in Bucharest, according to which Russia included the area between the Prut and Dniester rivers up to the Kiliya mouth of the Danube. Prior to that, the central and northern parts of Bessarabia were part of the vassal Moldavian principality, and the southern regions with the cities of Bendery, Akkerman, Izmail, Kaushany were the possessions of the Ottoman Empire.

In 1813, a regional government was created in Bessarabia with the participation of local boyars and Russian officials. On April 17 (29), 1818, the "Charter for the Formation of the Bessarabian Region" was issued, according to which, under the plenipotentiary governor appointed by St. Petersburg, the Supreme Council was established, which had the highest administrative and judicial power. Regional and local authorities were still in the hands of the Moldavian boyars. On February 17 (29), 1928, the Charter was canceled and Bessarabia became part of the Novorossiysk Governor General. In the meantime, according to the Akkerman Russian-Turkish Convention of September 25 (October 7), 1826, the internal autonomy of the Danubian principalities was restored, and after the Russian-Turkish war of 1828-1829. under the Adrianople peace treaty, it was further expanded, in particular, Turkish troops were withdrawn from them. At the same time, the Danube Delta was annexed to Russia. Until 1834, Moldavia and Wallachia remained occupied by Russian troops and were ruled by the Governor-General P.D. Kiselev, whose activities were aimed at bringing the principalities closer together and carrying out some management reforms. Again, the question of ownership of the territories at the mouth of the Danube arose during the Crimean War of 1853-1856, during which England, France and the Kingdom of Sardinia took the side of the Ottoman Empire against Russia. According to the Paris Peace Treaty of 1856, Russia ceded the Danube Delta and Southern Bessarabia to the Ottoman Empire, which administratively was included in the vassal Principality of Moldavia, which at that time was not a subject of international law. According to the treaty, the Russian protectorate over the Danubian principalities was replaced by a collective protectorate of 7 powers (England, France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, the Ottoman Empire and Sardinia) and their autonomy within the Ottoman Empire was confirmed. In 1859–1861 on the basis of the unification of the Wallachian and Moldavian principalities, a new state arose - the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, which since 1862 took the name of Romania - also in vassal dependence on the Ottoman Empire.

In the context of a new aggravation of the situation in the Balkans and the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878. the question arose about the return of southern Bessarabia to Russia. According to the preliminary San Stefano Treaty of February 19 (March 3), 1878, in exchange for the return of South Bessarabia to Russia, Romania, whose independence was recog

Ottoman Empire, received Northern Dobruja with Constanta. However, the Romanian government declared that it would not recognize the act "concluded without us, against us and to our detriment". Accordingly, in an attempt to preserve Southern Bessarabia and obtain Northern Dobruja, Bucharest appealed to the great European powers, but no concrete promises were made. As a result, the Berlin Congress (June 1 (13) - July 1 (13), 1878) recognized the independence of Romania, provided that it accepts the territorial changes authorized by the congress (Southern Bessarabia changed to Northern Dobruja, while the Danube Delta remained with Romania) and ensure the equality of all peoples and religious denominations inhabiting it .

The recognition of Romania's independence by the great European powers dragged on until 1880, when it was recognized by Germany, England and France, who sought economic concessions from her. On March 14, 1881, Romania became a kingdom, and the following year it began to propagate the idea of the unity of Romanians in one state among the population of Austro-Hungarian Transylvania. Bucharest's dissatisfaction with France and Russia led him to focus on Germany, which was able to reconcile Austria-Hungary and Romania. As a result, on October 18 (30), 1883, a secret Romanian-Austro-Hungarian union treaty was signed in Vienna for a period of 5 years with a possible automatic prolongation for 3 years. On the same day, Germany joined this treaty, and on May 3 (15), 1888, Italy. In fact, it was about an alliance against Russia, in the event of the defeat of which Romania was to receive Bessarabia² .

Gradually, the idea of creating a "Great Romania" by annexing the territories of Southern Dobruja from Bulgaria, Transylvania and Bukovina from Austria-Hungary and Bessarabia from Russia became the main goal of Romanian foreign policy. In the conditions of the split of Europe into two military-political blocs, Bucharest flirted first with one, then with the other. A new crisis in the Balkans allowed Romania to realize part of its territorial claims. During the First Balkan War (October 9, 1912 - May 30, 1913) Greece, Montenegro, Serbia and Bulgaria conquered almost all the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire, but the division between the winners of the conquered territories led to the Second Balkan War (June 29 - August 10 1913), during which Montenegro, Serbia, Greece and the Ottoman Empire fought against Bulgaria. Under these conditions, Romania demanded Southern Dobruja from Bulgaria for its neutrality in the First Balkan War and on July 10 began military operations against it. One corps occupied the territory of Southern Dobruja, and the main forces of the Romanian army began to attack Sofia almost without hindrance. Already on July 29, Bulgaria ceased resistance, and according to the Bucharest Treaty signed on August 10, Romania secured Southern Dobruja. As a result of all these events, Romania's relations with the countries of the Triple Alliance cooled and rapprochement with the countries of the Entente began.

On the eve and at the beginning of the First World War, the countries of the Triple Alliance offered the Romanian leadership Bessarabia for participation in the war on their side, and the Entente countries - Transylvania, Banat and part of Bukovina. However, Romania was in no hurry to enter the war, being content with the profits from the foreign trade that became more active under the conditions of the war. As the war dragged on, the opposing factions continued to fight for the involvement of the Romanian state in the war on their side. By the summer of 1916, it became clear that the countries of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire) were unlikely to win the war, in addition, the successes of the Russian troops on the Eastern Front created the impression that the Entente would soon win the war. Under these conditions, Bucharest obtained from the Entente countries consent to join Romania after the victory in the war of the southern part of Bukovina to the river. Prut, throughout Transylvania to the river. Tisza, all Banat to the river. Danube and preservation of Southern Dobruja. Under these conditions, on August 4 (17), 1916, an agreement was signed on the accession of Romania to the Entente.

The Entente headquarters considered two main options for using the Romanian territory for strategic purposes. The first provided for a counter strike from Dobruja and from Thessaloniki with the aim of withdrawing Bulgaria from the war, and then the Ottoman Empire. The second option proceeded from the possibility of moving through Transylvania to the central regions of Austria-Hungary. This required the concentration of a significant grouping of Russian troops in the south, which could bypass the fortified zones of the Austro-German troops on the territory of Romania. Oddly enough, both of these options, at the insistence of the Anglo-French leadership, were rejected, and Romania was given the opportunity to attack Austria-Hungary alone, only a small corps of Russian troops was introduced into Dobruja. On August 14 (27), 1916, Romania declared war on Austria-Hungary, and the next day

the Romanian troops went on the offensive in Transylvania, which lasted until September 13 (26). During this time, the command of the Quadruple Alliance was able to transfer troops against Romania from other theaters of military operations and go on the offensive both in Transylvania and from Bulgarian territory. By October 14 (27) most of Dobruja was occupied. Meanwhile, in Transylvania, the Austro-German troops more and more successfully pressed the Romanian armies and by November 10 (23) reached the Rymnik-Slatina-Caracal front. On November 21 (December 4), the Austro-German troops occupied Bucharest and, advancing down the Danube, by the end of the year reached the Focsani line - the mouth of the Danube. The Russian command was forced, saving an ally, to transfer 35 infantry and 13 cavalry divisions to Romania, which amounted to over 1/3 of the formations of the active army. Thus, the entry of Romania into the war only worsened the situation on the Eastern Front, lengthening it by almost 500 km³.

The general dynamics of Russian-Romanian relations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was determined primarily by

different status of both states in the international arena. The Russian Empire was a great power, and Romania was one of the Balkan countries whose influence on the international situation was felt only at the regional level. It is clear that under these conditions, the territorial aspirations of the Romanian elite in relation to Russia remained, at best, groundless dreams. However, under the conditions of the revolution that began in February 1917 and the collapse of the Russian Empire, these claims suddenly turned out to be quite achievable. This book tells about how Romania managed to occupy and annex Bessarabia, what consequences this had for the Soviet-Romanian relations of the interwar period, and how the Bessarabian issue was resolved in the summer of 1940.

In a certain respect, the Bessarabian issue was unique, since this territory was the only one of all the lands lost in the west of the Russian Empire, the rejection of which was never recognized by the Soviet government. In addition, the Romanian intervention of 1918 was not only the very first, but also the longest intervention in the history of the Soviet state. Therefore, Soviet historiography, devoted to the Soviet-Romanian relations of the interwar twenty years, could speak much more freely and clearly about the real interests of the Soviet Union in the Bessarabian issue. The liberation of the territory of Bessarabia from the Romanian occupation has always been recognized as the main goal of Moscow. However, since the Bessarabian issue was nevertheless of a local nature and could not have a decisive influence on Soviet foreign policy as a whole, a rather original picture emerged in the domestic historiography of the foreign policy of the USSR. If all other states in their international policy were guided by their own interests, then the Soviet Union was engaged only in demonstrating its peacefulness and fighting for peace. In principle, of course, it was admitted that the USSR also had its own interests, but usually they were spoken about so vaguely that it was almost impossible to understand the motives of Soviet foreign policy.

However, the rejection of such an ideological approach makes Soviet foreign policy as understandable as the policy of any other country. Consideration of the international situation within the framework of the historical and political analysis of the development of systems of international relations shows that the Soviet leadership in the early 1920s. faced with a difficult but rather traditional problem. During the years of the Revolution and the Civil War, Soviet Russia lost the positions won by the Russian Empire in the international arena and territories in Eastern Europe. In terms of its influence in Europe, the country was thrown back 200 years into the past. Under these conditions, the Soviet leadership could either agree to the regional status of the USSR, or re-start the struggle for a return to the club of great powers. Having made a choice in favor of the second alternative, the Soviet leadership adopted the concept of "world revolution", which combined the new ideology and the traditional tasks of foreign policy to strengthen the country's influence in the world. The strategic goal of the country's foreign policy was the global reorganization of the system of international relations, which made England, France and their allies the main opponents. Of course, against the backdrop of such serious foreign policy goals, the

problem of territorial demarcation with Romania was of purely subordinate importance. However, it should be remembered that the Bessarabian issue had a noticeable impact on the relations of the Soviet Union with the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. This, in turn, had a certain impact on Moscow's relations with the great powers. In Soviet historical literature, the Bessarabian issue was studied mainly in a diplomatic aspect, while military events, with the exception of the Romanian occupation of the region in early 1918, received incomparably less attention⁴. Now, when the historian is not bound by obligatory ideological dogmas and many archival documents have become available, there is an opportunity to study this problem more comprehensively, to show how Soviet diplomatic steps were reinforced by military measures in 1919 and especially in the summer of 1940. Therefore, one of the goals of this study is a more detailed and systematic description of the Bessarabian campaign of the Red Army in 1940 on the basis of available archival documents.

This problem remains relevant also because in Romanian historiography there is an obligatory unanimity on the issues of Romania's relations with the Russian Empire and the USSR. In the most general form, the Romanian version is presented in an interview with Romanian President I. Iliescu: "The image of Russia as an occupier has taken root in the perception of Romanians. After all, Romania had the misfortune to be at the crossroads of interests of three empires - the Ottoman, Austrian and then Russian. All of them tried to occupy the Romanian provinces. In 1812, Russia tears off half of its territory from Moldova and turns it into a Russian province - Bessarabia. Nevertheless, the Romanians participated in the anti-Ottoman war of 1877, in which Russia also fought for our independence from Turkey. True, in gratitude, Russia re-occupied the territory that Romania received after the Crimean War (three counties in the south of Bessarabia). Then there was 1940 and the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, according to which the USSR again occupies Romanian territory, not only Bessarabia, but also the north of Bukovina, which never belonged to Russia or the USSR ... All this remained in the memory of the Romanians. But now we are not putting forward territorial claims to anyone. We have advocated and advocate the development of relations with both the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. And with Russia, we must put aside all grievances, including the dissatisfaction of Russians and Ukrainians with the participation of the Romanian army in the war on the side of Germany. As a rule, to substantiate this touching version, Romanian authors falsify real historical events in every possible way.

In recent years, many events in the interwar history of the 20th century have been reassessed in Russian literature. This process also affected the study of Soviet-Romanian relations. However, unfortunately, often the main motive here is not the desire to deepen our knowledge of that period, but only the desire to indiscriminately denigrate Soviet foreign policy. For this, as a rule, abstract moral assessments are used, without taking into account the specific historical realities and the mentality of the era. Therefore, in our opinion, one should try to take an unbiased look at the Soviet-Romanian relations in their dynamics through the prism of the development of the Versailles system of international relations and the genesis of the Second World War. The author believes that every state has the right to pursue any foreign policy, so this study is not about blaming or justifying Soviet or Romanian foreign policy. However, this does not mean at all that in assessing this policy one should proceed only from the political situation. Moreover, it is the distant prospect that allows a more objective assessment of past events. In addition, one should not break the chain of events, which also distorts their perception. That is why, in our opinion, it is important to consider the Bessarabian issue against the backdrop of Soviet-Romanian relations for all 22 years of its existence.

Thus, modern Russian historiography is faced with the task of comprehensively studying the path along which the Soviet Union managed to go from a pariah of the international community to the second superpower of the world. This will allow, on the one hand, to pay tribute to our ancestors, whose sweat and blood this path was watered, and on the other hand, it will give modern Russian society certain guidelines for the future. Of course, the solution of this problem will require long-term efforts and study of the development of international relations at different levels. An integral part of this problem is the bilateral relations of the Soviet Union with its western neighbors, the largest of which were Poland and Romania, which were the main basis of the anti-Soviet "cordon sanitaire".

By the beginning of 1917, the Romanian front passed approximately along the line of the Eastern Carpathians-Focsani-Brailov-the mouth of the Danube. The 9th, 4th, 6th Russian and 2nd Romanian armies operated at the front. Out of 137,903 sq. km of the territory of Romania, troops of the countries of the Quadruple Union occupied 99,845 square meters. km (72.4%). The last attempt of the Russian-Romanian offensive was made on July 11 (24), 1917 in the Foksha direction, where the troops of the 4th Russian and 2nd Romanian armies broke through the enemy's front and liberated 30 villages, capturing about 4 thousand people and capturing 85 guns, but the failure of the offensive of the Southwestern Front led to the fact that on July 12 (25) the Headquarters ordered the attacks to stop. For their part, the German-Austrian troops on July 24-26 (August 6-8) launched an offensive near Focsani and in the valley of the river. Oytuz, which resulted in a slight advance of the front to the north. In these battles, the loss of Russian troops killed, missing and wounded amounted to 25 thousand people, Romanian - 27.5 thousand people, the Germans lost 47 thousand people killed and wounded⁶. By mid-August, the fighting on the Romanian front subsided and the front stabilized.⁷ By September 1917, the Romanian Front had 1,976,260 combatants and non-combatants of the Russian army and 458,000 Romanian military personnel⁸.

Revolutionary Chaos

Meanwhile, the revolutionary events in Petrograd reached the outskirts of Russia, including Bessarabia, which was in the rear zone of the Romanian front. On March 8 (21), 1917, the overthrow of the autocracy was officially announced in Tiraspol, which was generally enthusiastically received by the local population. As throughout the country, the transformation of state institutions began: various law enforcement agencies were dissolved, provincial and district commissariats were created. At the same time, already on March 8 (21) a local Council arose in Bendery, on March 12 (25) - in Tiraspol, on March 13 (26) - in Chisinau. By the beginning of May 1917, Soviets were created in all counties of Bessarabia. Thus, in Bessarabia, as well as throughout the country, there was a dual power. Thus, the population got the opportunity to compare the programs and actions of different political forces. Already on March 19 (April 1), the Tiraspol Council introduced an 8-hour working day, and ignoring this decision by the owners of enterprises led to the fact that the workers began to introduce it without prior notice. In the countryside, the peasantry pinned their hopes on the solution of the agrarian problem to the revolution. Actually, as well as throughout the country, in Bessarabia, already in the spring of 1917, the peasants began to secretly divide earth.

As in other national outskirts of Russia, in the context of the widespread popularization of the slogan about the right of nations to self-determination, along with social movements, a national movement began to form in Bessarabia. Initially, the slogan of creating autonomy within the Russian Federal Republic became the leading idea of the national movement. However, the national movements of that time were, among other things, a form of consolidation of certain social strata in the region. Therefore, the Moldavian National Party (MNP), created in the second half of March 1917, brought together, first of all, the Bessarabian landlords who were interested in preserving their land holdings. For their part, the Romanian authorities, from the point of view of which not Moldovans, but Romanians lived in Bessarabia, in the conditions of growing unrest in Russia, decided to intensify the propaganda of the idea of unity of the Romanian people within the framework of one state, which had been going on since 1905. Therefore, the Romanian press and Romanian agents in Bessarabia promoted in every way the idea of autonomy for the province, which, in their opinion, should have been the first step towards unification with Romania. At the beginning of April 1917

The Romanian embassy in Petrograd established contacts with some Bessarabian Moldavian intellectuals - I. Incults, P. Khalippa and others, who later arrived in Chisinau with a group of agitators (40-50 people)⁹. Part of the leadership of the MNP since the official creation of the party on April 2 (15), 1917 insisted on the introduction of the Moldavian language in state institutions, advocated the solution of the agrarian issue only in the interests of the Moldavians, and gradually popularized the idea of unification with Romania.

The troops of the Romanian front, like the entire Russian army, were also drawn into the revolution. In May 1917, at the front, along with the general Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies, Soviets of Soldiers' and Officers' Deputies-Moldovans were created, which popularized the Romanian language as a common language for Romanians and Moldovans. That is, along with the social polarization in the army, there was also a national polarization of servicemen. True, the influence of these nationally oriented forces in Bessarabia was insignificant. On April 10–13 (23–26) at the provincial congress of folk teachers, representatives of the MPP failed to get their proposals to teach children in Romanian accepted. The congress spoke in favor of education in the Moldavian and Russian languages. Attempts by the MNP to win support from the Moldavian peasants also came to nothing, since for the overwhelming mass of the peasantry the representatives of the MNP were "bourgeois from Chisinau". Moreover, 4 propagandists for unification with Romania were killed by peasants¹⁰. During the 1st Bessarabian provincial peasant congress, which took place on May 21–23 (June 3–5), 1917, the program for solving the agrarian issue only for Moldovans was rejected. The congress spoke in favor of transferring the land to public ownership, for the national equality of all residents of Bessarabia and for its preservation as an autonomy within Russia¹¹. As MPP members V. Cazacchio and V. Valuta correctly described the situation, "the Moldovan people consider us their enemies"¹².

At the end of May 1917, the MNP managed to hold a congress of Moldavian teachers and organize courses for Moldavian teachers the following month. However, the apparent Romanianization of the program outraged the students. This protest had a significant resonance, and the MNP had to remove two of the most odious members from the Central Committee of the party - the landowners P. Gore and V. Herz. Among the Moldavian nationalists, even during the revolution of 1905-1907, the idea to create "Sfatul Tsarii" (Council of the country) arose. Now, in the new conditions, this idea was again voiced by the MNP in April 1917. In the meantime, after the July events in Petrograd and the end of the dual power, the party began to form 10 cohorts (40 people each) of national detachments, which were led by the one created on July 23 (5 August) in Chisinau, the Central Moldavian Military Executive Committee. The Kishinev Soviet, headed by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, supported this undertaking. The created "Moldovan battalions", together with the Cossack detachments, were involved in suppressing the most significant centers of the peasant movement. In August, with their help, they began to take away from the peasants the land they had previously seized. At the end of July, the chairman of the Central Moldavian Military Executive Committee, Ensign G. Pinteia, met with the Romanian Minister T. Ionescu in Iasi. The result of this meeting was an influx of agitators from Romania into Bessarabia.

At the same time, a delegation from the Bessarabian province arrived in Petrograd, intending to achieve its autonomy. In Bessarabia itself, as well as throughout the country, against the backdrop of a growing crisis, the population was radicalized. On August 27–31 (September 9–13), the II Provincial Peasant Congress spoke in favor of transferring land, water, forests and mineral resources to the public domain and supported the Bolshevik slogan "All land to the peasants!"¹⁴. In August–September 1917 in Bessarabia and the Romanian On the front, Bolshevik organizations were created and the popularity of the slogan "All power to the Soviets!"¹⁵. For its part, the Central Moldavian Military Executive Committee refused to unite with the existing Soviets, and on September 24 (October 7) decided to begin the formation of national Moldavian units. The command of the Romanian Front and the Odessa Military District supported this initiative and seconded Moldavian soldiers and officers to these formations. On October 7 (20), the Central Moldavian Military Executive Committee decided to convene a Moldavian Military Congress, and although the Provisional Government and the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief forbade its holding, the congress opened on October 20 (November 2) in Chisinau. The congress was attended

by about 600 delegates, most of whom were officers, although according to the then election norms, there should have been at least 7.5 thousand delegates from 250 thousand military personnel from Bessarabia. A group of prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian army, Transylvanian soldiers, was invited to the congress, who began to proclaim toasts in honor of the Romanian king and sing national Romanian songs, which caused discontent among a significant part of the delegates. In the end, on October 21 (November 3), the congress spoke in favor of the creation of "Sfatul Tsarii" and for the autonomy of Bessarabia. It was decided to give 30 out of 130 seats in Sfatul Tsarii to the peasants, all other Soviets were to be liquidated or become purely professional organizations. The task was to form the Moldavian army, for which it was necessary to increase the number of cohorts from 16 to 100 and create the Moldavian cavalry. At the congress, 32 members of Sfatul Tsarii were elected, in whose elections a little more than half of the delegates participated, since the very idea of creating such a body was not very popular. Officially, "Sfatul Tsarii" was created "to prepare and implement the autonomy of Bessarabia" and was a temporary body until the convocation of the Bessarabian Constituent Assembly¹⁶. Accordingly, Sfatul Tsarii, which began its activities on November 21 (December 4), recognized "the basic principle of the structure of Russia as a federal democratic republic"¹⁷. Meanwhile, in Petrograd, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets took power into its own hands. On

October 26 (November 8), 1917, the Military Revolutionary Committee (MRC) of the Petrograd Soviet sent out an order to the fronts outlining the Decrees on Peace and Land and the program of the Soviet government. Army councils and committees were invited

immediately take power into their own hands. The next day, this order was published in the newspaper of the Council of Soldiers' and Officers' Deputies of the Romanian Front. On November 1 (14) and November 3 (16), the Decrees on Peace and Land were published in Chisinau, and on November 22 (December 5), the Chisinau Council adopted a resolution recognizing the decisions of the II All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the Council of People's Commissars (SNK) of the RSFSR¹⁹.

The Decree on Land caused a special joy of the local population. Accordingly, the Bessarabian landlords were categorically against such a solution to the agrarian issue, since by the end of 1917 they had lost about 2/3 of their landed property. At the Moldavian military congress, a "revolutionary committee" was created to defend the Constituent Assembly. On October 27 (November 9), the Chisinau Revolutionary Committee was formed, and on November 4 (17) the Bessarabian Provincial Revolutionary Committee, which aimed at maintaining the power of the Provisional Government. This situation was taken advantage of by the leaders of Sfatul Tsarii, who unexpectedly received support from the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, although earlier these parties were against its creation. Members of the MNP, Moldavian Socialist-Revolutionaries and Cadets²⁰ were included in the Sfatul Tarii, which was replenished through co-optation. Regarding the future of Bessarabia, there was no unity within the framework of Sfatul Tsarii. There were supporters of autonomy within Russia, state independence, unification with Romania or Ukraine. The only thing that united all of them was the rejection of Soviet power and its laws.

On November 3 (16), 1917, the Council of People's Commissars published the "Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia", which proclaimed: "1. Equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia; 2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination up to secession and formation of an independent state; 3. Cancellation of all and any national and national-religious privileges and restrictions; 4. Free development of national minorities and ethnographic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia"²¹. On November 7 (20), the Kiev Central Rada announced the creation of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR) within the framework of the all-Russian federation²². In the meantime, on November 8 (21), the Council of People's Commissars turned to the belligerent countries with a proposal to conclude peace without annexations and indemnities²³.

On November 9 (22), the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR sent a telegram to the troops urging them to conclude a truce at the front²⁴. The command of the Romanian Front, as well as the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, refused to carry out this order of the Council of People's Commissars, but the soldiers who knew about it from the newspapers refused to fight. Realizing that it would be impossible to evade any action in the conditions of Petrograd's public offer of a truce, and to fight alone would be suicide, Infantry General D.G. Shcherbachev, who served as an assistant to the nominal commander of the Romanian Front, the Romanian King Ferdinand I, with the consent of the Romanian leadership and representatives of the Entente, on November 21 (December 4), began negotiations with the Austro-German command on a truce. It was assumed that either it would be possible to conclude a truce and use the Romanian troops and national formations to suppress the revolution in southern Russia, or the Romanian army would have to be withdrawn through Bessarabia and Ukraine to the Don steppes to unite it with parts of A.M. Kaledin. The problem was that Germany and Austria-Hungary, in order to put pressure on Romania, spread rumors about the impossibility of concluding an armistice with the Romanian king Ferdinand, but in the end this issue was bypassed and on November 26 (December 9), 1917, an armistice was signed in Focsani Romanian front²⁵.

The truce between the RSFSR and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance in Brest-Litovsk was signed on December 2 (15), 1917.
²⁶ – The cessation of fighting on the Eastern Front allowed the German command to start transferring troops from there to other fronts. Thus, in September-December 1917 alone, 25 divisions were withdrawn from the Eastern Front²⁷. The Soviet proposal for a truce and the start of negotiations between the RSFSR and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance led to the fact that the Entente countries decided to intensify their policy in Russia in order to restore the Eastern Front on its territory as support for various formations that announced the continuation of the war with Germany and its allies, as well as and preparations for the intervention of the Entente troops. Accordingly, the Entente supported the creation of governments on the national outskirts of Russia. In an effort to prevent the liquidation of the German Eastern Front, England decided to recognize Kaledin and push Rumania to cooperate with him.

The Romanian government generally supported these aspirations of the Entente. Already on November 8 (21), 1917, the Romanian ambassador in London offered the British leadership the participation of the Romanian army in the fight against the Soviets. On the same day, at a meeting with the British Prime Minister D. Lloyd George and Foreign Minister A. Balfour, the representative of the American President V. Wilson, Colonel E. House proposed "to advise Romania to cooperate with any allied fighting forces that are territorially closest to it"²⁸. On November 10 (23), the President of the United States promised Romania for participation in the anti-Soviet intervention to support her claims to the territory of Russia at the upcoming peace conference. The French mission in Iasi was given the task of establishing contact with anti-Soviet movements in southern Russia. General Shcherbachev handed over to Romania armaments, ammunition and food stocks of the Russian Romanian Front for 16 million rubles, part of which was to be sent to Kaledin. On the territory of Romania, volunteer units were formed from the military personnel of the Russian army to be sent to the Don.

On November 23 (December 6), the Central Rada of the UNR, with the support of representatives of the Entente, announced the formation of a united Ukrainian front from the Southwestern and Romanian fronts, headed by General Shcherbachev. For the formation of national troops, a National Committee was created, which brought together representatives of the national organizations of the Romanian Front. On December 4 (17), the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR recognized the UNR, pointing out at the same time the inadmissibility of the disorganization of the front, the disarmament of Russian troops and the support of units

Kaledin and demanding to stop such actions within 48 hours. Otherwise, the Council of People's Commissars would have considered the Central Rada in a state of "war with Soviet power in Russia and Ukraine"²⁹. On December 7 (20), 1917, the Romanian leadership decided to provide military assistance to the UNR. On December 10 (23), England and France agreed on the division of zones of influence in Russia: England got the Caucasus, Transcaucasia and the Don, and France - Bessarabia, Ukraine and Crimea³⁰. To ensure communication between Romania and the UNR, the head of the French military mission in Iasi, General A. Bertelo, insisted that Bessarabia be occupied by their troops. The Inter-Allied Commission began negotiations with the "Sfatul Tarii", who declared himself the supreme authority in Bessarabia, on bringing Romanian troops into the region to maintain order³¹. The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets, which met in Kharkov on December 12 (25), proclaimed the creation of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic as part of an all-Russian federation. At the end of December, clashes began between Soviet detachments and the Haidamak units of the UNR.

In the meantime, the conference of the Bolsheviks of the Romanian Front, held on November 28-30 (December 11-13), decided to help the population of Bessarabia in the implementation of the Decrees of Soviet power and elected a front-line party committee, which on December 2 (15) created the Bolshevik Military Revolutionary Committee in Sokoly (a suburb of the city of Iasi). Under the leadership of the Commissioner of the Council of People's Commissars on the Romanian Front, a member of the Military Revolutionary Committee at the Headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief S.G. Roshal VRK in Sokoly on December 3 (16), 1917, relying on the support of the Sokolsky garrison, announced the taking of power on the Romanian front into their own hands³². As the influence of the Bolsheviks gradually covered more and more Russian military units, General Shcherbachev turned to the Romanians and representatives of the Entente for support, referring to the fact that he sent his most loyal troops to the aid of Kerensky. On the night of 4 (17) December, some of the members of the Bolshevik Military Revolutionary Committee were arrested. Under these conditions, the Military Revolutionary Committee announced the preparation of a rebuff to the National Committee. On December 6 (19) in Iasi, during negotiations with the Romanian command, it became clear that the Romanians would not allow the arrest of Shcherbachev and the dispersal of the National Committee. On December 7 (20), Shcherbachev invited members of the Military Revolutionary Committee to negotiate with the National Committee, guaranteeing them immunity. However, having pulled up loyal units to Iasi - Ukrainian formations and 4 Romanian regiments, Shcherbachev arrested the delegates of the Military Revolutionary Committee on December 8 (21). The next day, the chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee, Roshal, was shot, the Military Revolutionary Committee itself was dispersed, and the units supporting it were disarmed. Following this, the disarmament of other unreliable, from the point of view of the representatives of the Entente, Russian units began. To facilitate this operation, the Romanian authorities delayed food for the Russian units. Disarmed Russian servicemen were imprisoned in concentration camps, and to justify these actions, the version of robberies and pogroms allegedly perpetrated everywhere by Russian troops in Romania³³ was widely propagated.

In the meantime, on December 2 (15), 1917, Sfatul Tarii, having received more than 2 million lei from Romania³⁴, adopted a declaration declaring Bessarabia a "Moldovan People's Republic, which is an equal member of the United Federative Russian Democratic Republic", until the convening of the People's Assembly Republic "Sfatul Tseriy" (Chairman I.K. Inkulets) was declared the highest authority, and the Council of General Directors (Chairman P.V. Yerkhan), responsible to "Sfatul Tseriy" became the executive power. It was promised to solve the agrarian question on the basis of public property, and a number of statements of a general democratic character were made. Calling for the defense of the Russian Constituent Assembly, the authors of the declaration concluded that "only then will we save our land and keep our common homeland, the Great Russian Federative Democratic Republic, from final destruction!"³⁵

On December 4 (17) in Chisinau, under the government of the Moldavian People's Republic (MPR), a French consulate was established, headed by R. Sarre, who declared his support for Sfatul Tarii³⁶. Through him, on January 2 (15), 1918, the local "government" received a letter from the French envoy to Romania, A. Saint-Oler, in which it was reported that the entry of Romanian troops into Bessarabia was in the interests of the Entente countries and "is an exclusively military measure aimed at to ensure the normal functioning of the rear of the Russian-Romanian front ... Thus, the introduction of Romanian troops cannot have any influence either on the present political internal situation of the country, or on the political

the future of Bessarabia"³⁷. When this statement was published on January 24 (February 6), 1918, the new Prime Minister of the MPR, D. Chugureanu, accompanied it with the following conclusion: "Thus, the Romanian troops came to us not as conquerors and enemies, but as friends of the people"³⁸.

On December 10 (23), 1917, the II Congress of Soviets of Soldiers', Workers' and Sailors' Deputies of the Romanian Front, the Odessa District and the Black Sea Fleet (Rumcherod) opened in Odessa together with a group of peasant representatives. The congress supported the formation and policy of the Council of People's Commissars in Petrograd and adopted a resolution on insubordination to Shcherbachev and various "national" commissars. The re-elected Central Executive Committee of Rumcheroda was declared the highest Soviet authority on the Romanian front³⁹. On December 15 (28), the Rumcherod Front Department settled in Chisinau, which was supposed to create the headquarters of the Romanian Front, help strengthen Soviet power in Bessarabia and consolidate the armies of the Romanian Front on the line of the Prut and Danube rivers.

Romanian invasion In early

December 1917, individual Romanian detachments began to seize the border villages of Bessarabia. So, in Leovo, by agreement with Shcherbachev's headquarters, a small Romanian detachment was introduced to guard the grain warehouse, but the local Soviet rebuffed him, and, having lost an officer and 2 soldiers, the detachment retreated beyond the river. Prut⁴⁰. But on December 7 (21), a new Romanian detachment seized Leovo and demanded to extradite the activists, threatening to shoot

every tenth inhabitant. In the end, the members of the executive committee of the local Soviet were arrested and shot⁴¹. Having received a message about the events in Iasi and Leovo⁴², on December 16 (29), 1917, the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR, by its note, asked Romania for more detailed information about what had happened and warned that it would not tolerate "any reprisals not only against Russians, but also against Romanian revolutionaries and socialists and "will not stop at the most severe measures against the counter-revolutionary Romanian conspirators, accomplices of Kaledin, Shcherbachev and Rada"⁴³. On December 22 (January 4, 1918), the Soviet government decided to strengthen the revolutionary units of the Romanian Front, and the commander-in-chief N.V. Krylenko ordered the Russian troops to withdraw from the territory of Romania to Bessarabia and "in the event of a collision with the Romanian troops, make their way with weapons in⁴⁴

In its response note to Petrograd, the Romanian government stated that it did not have any information about the events in Leovo, and presented the events in Iasi as protecting the Romanian population from robberies by Russian troops arbitrarily leaving the front, while ties with Ukraine and Kaledin were explained by the need to purchase food to supply population and troops, including Russians⁴⁵. On December 31 (January 13, 1918), Petrograd protested in connection with the arrests of Russian soldiers in the 49th Infantry Division and demanded "from the Romanian Government the release of those arrested, the punishment of those who made the arrests, the lawlessness and disorderly actions of the Romanian authorities and guarantees that such actions will not will repeat. Failure to receive an answer to this demand of ours within 24 hours will be considered by us as a new break, and we will then take military measures, up to the most drastic ones. Since the Romanian government did not react to these protests, on the night of January 1 (14), 1918, the composition of the Romanian embassy, headed by Ambassador K.I. Diamandi. However, at the request of representatives of all foreign embassies in Petrograd, those arrested were released the next day. They were again given the demand of the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR to stop arrests and release Russian soldiers⁴⁷. The political disengagement in the troops of the Romanian Front led to the fact that part of the revolutionary-minded

units retreated to Bessarabia. For their part, the local Bolsheviks on December 13 (26), 1917 blocked the railways, forbidding the transport of goods to Romania. The Sfatul Tarii attempt to take control of the railways failed, as the Moldavian soldiers refused to act against the Russian revolutionary units. Then "Sfatul Tsarii" turned to Shcherbachev for support. The general ordered units of the 7th cavalry and 61st infantry divisions to be sent to Bessarabia to occupy the stations of Lipkany, Balti, Oknitsa, Ungheni, Chisinau, Bendery, Razdelnaya, Odessa, but this order was not carried out. Under these conditions, on December 8 (22), "Sfatul Tarii" appealed to the Romanian leadership with a request for military assistance⁴⁸. It was the Sfatul Tarii representative from Leovo who traveled to Iasi and asked the Romanian General Staff to equip military guards and send them to Leovo. Yerkhan convinced the Sfatul Tarii deputies that "we cannot rely on the Moldovan units that we have: they are Bolshevized. The only way out is to bring in foreign troops."⁴⁹ The peasant faction "Sfatul Tarii" expressed support for the SNK of the RSFSR and even sent 3 representatives to Petrograd with a warning about the preparation of the Romanian occupation of Bessarabia.

Thus, the internal state of "Sfatul Tsarii" does not allow us to speak of it as a single body. It is clear that under such conditions, supporters of rapprochement with Romania had to act in secret from the rest of its members. On December 14 (27), representatives of Sfatul Tarii in Iasi again turned to Romania for help. They also hoped to get help from the UNR. On December 19 (January 1, 1918), at a closed meeting of Sfatul Tarii, it was decided to give the Council of General Directors carte blanche to invite foreign troops. True, even in the Board of Directors there was no unity on the question of who exactly should be invited. On December 21 (January 3, 1918), a telegram was sent to the Minister of War of Romania in Iasi with a request to send a regiment of Transylvanians from Kiev to Chisinau at the disposal of the Board of Directors: "According to the decision of the General Board of Directors of the Moldavian Republic, we ask you to order an urgent dispatch to Chisinau of a regiment of Ardyalians" ⁵⁰. On December 22 (January 4, 1918), the Board of Directors turned to Colonel d'Albia, the French military attache to the MPR, with a proposal to prepare an agreement "on inviting allied attaches and sending instructors for the proper organization of the republic's troops"⁵¹.

Despite all the efforts and promotion of friendship with Romania, the INP has not been able to create a noticeable support for this program among the local population. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, only 2.3% of the voters of Bessarabia voted for deputies from the MNP⁵². Even the Moldavian soldiers of the Republican army were opposed to the idea of secession from Russia. In Chisinau, the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Southern District and the executive committees of the Chisinau and Bessarabian Provincial Soviets on December 24 (January 6, 1918) created the Revolutionary Headquarters of the Soviet All-Republican Forces of the Bessarabian District, headed by E.M. Venediktov, to whom all Soviet detachments were subordinate⁵³. On December 28 (January 10, 1918), Romanian and Ukrainian units captured Ungheni, massacring supporters of the Soviet regime. December 29 (January 11) with the knowledge and permission of "Sfatul Tsarii" in the village. 40 officers and 20 soldiers of the Romanian army arrived in Lozovo, ostensibly to buy food⁵⁴. On the same day, "Sfatul Tarii" decided to invite the Romanians to restore order. However, information about this was leaked to the press and caused general discontent. Under these conditions, on January 1 (14), 1918, the Chisinau Soviet took power into its own hands, but Sfatul Tarii was not dispersed. During January 1918, Soviet power was established in the unoccupied regions of Bessarabia.

On January 1 (14), 1918, the Front Department issued Order No. 1, in which it ordered all authorities and institutions to strictly follow his orders, not to obey the orders of the Central Rada of the UNR, General Shcherbachev and others

self-proclaimed bodies. All military and postal-telegraph institutions of the Romanian Front were ordered to evacuate from Iasi to Chisinau, and the front's supply agencies - to Bendery and go under the control of the Front Department. The detachments formed by the Front Department occupied the railway station and other important points in Chisinau. The military committees were given the task of restoring the army to protect the "cause of freedom ... under the authority of Soviet power." They were required to "take care of the termination of vacations, the suspension of the nationalization and demobilization of troops"⁵⁵. Reporting on the political and military situation, the head of the Revolutionary Staff Venediktov suggested that the SNK of the RSFSR appeal "to the government of the Moldavian Republic so that it would refuse to send Romanian troops into Bessarabia." For its part, the Revolutionary Headquarters was ready, at the direction of the Council of People's Commissars, to influence the Moldovan government⁵⁶.

On December 24 (January 6, 1918), the Minister of War of Romania, General Jankovescu, ordered the Transylvanians, who were near Kiev, to move by rail to Chisinau, where they arrived on January 6 (19) at about one in the morning. Upon learning of this, the Chisinau Soviet and the Front Department sent troops from the local garrison to the station. Trying to prevent the disarmament of the Transylvanians, the leaders of the MPR, Inkulets and Yerkhan, came to the station to persuade the soldiers of the Moldavian regiment to return to the barracks, arguing that the Transylvanians allegedly had no intention of fighting against the revolutionary organizations of Bessarabia, but were sent to the front. But the soldiers did not want to listen to them. After a small skirmish, the Transylvanians, having lost 5 people killed, were disarmed and arrested⁵⁷.

Meanwhile, on January 4 (17), Romania decided to send troops to Bessarabia. On January 5 (18) Ukrainian, and on January 6 (19) Romanian troops crossed the river. Prut and began the occupation of Bessarabia. The Romanian troops sent to Bessarabia marched on Chisinau in three detachments. One of them was detained by the troops of the Front Department in Ungheni and driven out with heavy losses, while the other two moved to Chisinau and by the evening of January 6 (19) arrived at the Ghidighich station. The Romanian troops were met at Ghidighich and Kozhushna by Soviet detachments and at two o'clock in the morning on January 7 (20) retreated in disorder along the Strashensky highway, pursued by cavalry sent by the Front Department. Near the village of Trusheni, the Romanian units tried to turn onto the Gancesti road, but, met by the Soviet detachment here, they turned towards the Ghidighich station, and then retreated towards Ungheni. On the same day, at the Korneshty station, the 4th echelon of the Romanian troops, who were accompanied by General Nekrasov, sent to Bessarabia as Shcherbachev's authorized representative in order for him to impress the Russian population with his presence, were surrounded by a railway battalion and partly taken prisoner, and partly retreated. The next day, Nekrasov and his adjutant were taken prisoner and shot by a local self-defense detachment and a detachment of soldiers from the Romanian Front. The railway line from Chisinau to Straseni was dismantled in several places. On January 8 (21), a

detachment of the 2nd railway region repairing it collided with an echelon of Romanian troops. During the heated battle, 40 Romanian soldiers were taken prisoner, and the rest retreated towards Ungheni. Captured Romanian soldiers said that they did not know where the command was sending them, "that they were caught, forcibly

locked in wagons and sent away without explaining where or why"⁵⁸. On the night of January 10 (23) in the south of Bessarabia, in Bolgrad, the Military Revolutionary Committee of the 6th Army managed to disarm the Romanian company that had arrived from Galati⁵⁹. As a result, the first Romanian invasion was repulsed, and Leovo, Reni, Vulcanesti and Cahul were liberated⁶⁰. After the first victories, the Front Department reported to Rumcherod that "the army is in order. There is no danger. The strength in Bessarabia is ours. The national-political organizations, without exception, recognized the Front Department as the supreme authority of the front. The front department sent an ultimatum and a protest to

the Romanians about the introduction of troops and the liquidation of the headquarters. The Romanians are retreating"⁶¹. On January 6 (19), it became clear that the Sfatul Tarii leadership, which verbally declared that it was not involved in organizing the intervention, was in fact actively helping the Romanians. At a meeting of the presidiums of local Soviets and the Central Moldavian Military Executive Committee, when discussing the issue of intervention, it became known that three general directors of Sfatul Tarii went to Iasi to negotiate with the Romanian government on the entry of the Romanian army into Bessarabia. The audience condemned their actions and suggested that Incults and Yerkhan sign a telegram to Shcherbachev with a categorical demand for the withdrawal of Romanian troops from Bessarabia and an end to the intervention, to which they had to agree, fearing accusations of complicity with the interventionists. A telegram was sent to the Romanian government and General Shcherbachev: "We are protesting against the entry of Romanian troops into the territory of the Moldavian Republic. We categorically demand that the sending of troops be suspended and that the troops that have already been brought in be immediately withdrawn. The introduction of Romanian troops into Bessarabia threatens with the horrors of civil war, which has already begun. Russian troops must be allowed through without hindrance"⁶².

The Front Department organized the defense of Chisinau. Military warehouses were opened, weapons from them were distributed to the population, from which Red Guard detachments were created. On the night of January 7 (20), Chisinau was declared under martial law and cordoned off by the troops of the Front Department, which outlawed Sfatul Tarii, directors, leaders of nationalist organizations and officers of the counter-revolutionary Moldovan regiments and decided to disperse Sfatul Tarii⁶³. However, on the same day, with the help of the French military attache and the head of the Union of Land Owners of Bessarabia, the landowner P.V. Sinadino, the leaders of Sfatul Tsarii sent their envoys to Iasi asking for help. Some general directors also fled the city⁶⁴. Fearing arrests, the Sfatul Tsarii deputies, "hiding in the corners, watched the unfolding historical events from a safe distance"⁶⁵. Appeal to the Government of Romania for the entry

troops to Bessarabia was actually a matter of private individuals. The trip to Iasi of these directors, their letters and telegrams about the entry of occupation troops into Bessarabia were necessary for the Romanian government in order to show in the face of Western European public opinion that the Romanian occupation troops had come to Bessarabia, allegedly at the call of the "legitimate" government. Accordingly, on 12 (25) January, Romania notified the United States that, under an agreement with "the government of the Moldavian Republic of Bessarabia and General Shcherbachev, and in order not to let the army die of hunger", the Romanian troops occupied this region⁶⁶.

Convinced that it would not be possible to occupy Bessarabia with small forces, on January 7 (20), 1918, the Romanian command, with the consent of the representatives of the Entente, ordered the troops to cross the Prut River at several points and enter Bessarabia. The next day, the 11th Infantry Division under the command of General E. Broshtyanu crossed the Prut between Ungheni and Leovo, occupied Ungheni, Kainari, Poganesti and moved to Chisinau. The 13th Infantry Division moved to the south of Bessarabia, through Cahul. Between them moved the 2nd Cavalry Division. At the same time, the 1st Cavalry Division under the command of General M. Skins moved to the north of Bessarabia. On January 12 (25), all these divisions were merged into the 6th Army Corps under the command of Divisional General G. Istrati⁶⁷. On the way, the Romanian troops seized the railway facilities and food warehouses, dispersed the Soviets and peasant committees and shot their members, requisitioned food supplies from the peasants. All this caused the population to hate the occupiers and their local henchmen.

The reaction of the Bessarabian population to the events that took place is perfectly visible from the decision of the congress of peasant deputies of the Balti district. On January 14 (27), the congress adopted a resolution: "Taking into account that the regional body "Sfatul Tarii" did not include representatives of the entire working people, the majority of the composition of "Sfatul Tarii" consists of landowners pursuing a clearly imperialist policy, the Second Congress of Peasant Deputies of Balti the county decided:

1. Do not recognize the authority of "Sfatul Tsarii", which does not express the will of the working people, and arrest guilty members.
2. Recognize throughout the country the power of the Soviets, represented by the Council of People's Commissars, as a power protecting the interests of all working people.
3. Organize the power of the Soviets from the representatives of the peasants, soldiers and workers.
4. Do not separate from Russia, but go with her hand in hand with the entire Russian people, to eliminate all enemies people, whoever they are.
5. Re-elect members of all organizations, from village and city committees to provincial organizations, inclusive, which oppose the working people.
6. Discussing all the danger that threatens the revolution and the won freedoms, which comes from the invasion of the Romanians into the borders of the Russian Republic on Bessarabian territory, send delegates to Petrograd ... with a request to help us in the defense of the country.
7. To ask the government of the People's Commissars to categorically protest before the Rumanian government against the gross interference of a foreign country in our internal affairs.
8. To oblige this congress to send people to the remaining districts of Bessarabia to communicate our decisions with request to join our resolution..."

The congress took up the organization of defense against the invaders. It was decided to arm the peasants and create detachments of peasant youth, and for this, to issue weapons to the village committees for distribution among the population. In order to prevent hostile elements from informing the Romanian command, the congress decided to turn off all telephones at the landlords and establish control over the telephone exchange⁶⁸. Practically in all settlements of Bessarabia, self-defense detachments were created⁶⁹.

Meanwhile, in Odessa, on January 7 (20), 1918, the plenum of the Central Executive Committee of Rumcherod decided "to consider itself in a state of war with Romania, to declare the mobilization of volunteer detachments and a transport flotilla in Odessa and Tiraspol, Kherson, Akkerman, Bendery and Odessa districts .. To take measures for the internment of Romanian citizens and the sequestration of Romanian property"⁷⁰. However, the next day, Rumcherod again discussed the issue of fighting the interventionists and, trying to resolve the conflict peacefully, decided to demand that the Romanian government withdraw its troops from Bessarabia. On January 10 (23), the CEC Rumcherod informed the SNK of the RSFSR that "Romanian troops invaded the Russian Republic, occupied the border points of Cahul and Leovo, made an attempt [to capture] Chisinau and some stations of the Bendero-Ungheni line. We entered into battle with our units. Thus, the Romanian government, without officially declaring war, began hostile military operations against the Russian Federative Republic. On the same day, a statement demanding "the immediate withdrawal of all troops from the boundaries of the Russian Federative Republic" and providing the Russian troops of the Romanian Front with an unhindered "exit in full armament and with all property from the borders of Romania, in accordance with the order of the Commander-in-Chief" was handed over to the Romanian consul, as well as to the British and French missions in Odessa⁷¹. The next day, the Romanian consul informed Rumcherod that he did not know about the entry of the Romanian troops into Bessarabia, and the consuls of the Entente countries stated that Russian-Romanian detachments were sent to Bessarabia to protect military depots⁷². It became clear that the invaders would have to fight. Without breaking off negotiations with the consuls, Rumcherod set about organizing troops for the defense of Bessarabia.

For their part, the Romanian invaders also propagated the version that they came to

Bessarabia to protect the food located here, allegedly purchased by Romania in Russia to supply the Romanian front. On January 12 (25), the commander of the Romanian army, General K. Prezan, issued a proclamation that his troops entered Bessarabia at the invitation of "Sfatul Tarii" in order to ensure the transportation of provisions to supply the Russian and Romanian troops on the Romanian front. The appeal stated that the rumors that the Romanian government wants to occupy Bessarabia, to take away the land from the peasants, and from the whole people - the political and national rights received as a result of the revolution, do not correspond to reality. "I declare to you publicly that the Romanian army wants nothing more than to establish order and the calm that it brings, to give you the opportunity to strengthen your autonomy and your freedoms, as you yourself decide. The Romanian army will not offend a single inhabitant ... of whatever nationality and whatever religion he may be. Immediately, upon the establishment of order and tranquility, and as soon as there are guarantees that theft, robbery and murder will not resume, the Romanians will return to their home. And in the appeal of General Skina, it was indicated that the Romanian soldiers were carrying out "a mission of peace, with the goal of freedom, equality and fraternity"⁷⁴.

On the same day in Chisinau, on behalf of the delegation that traveled to meet the Romanian troops, a message was published, according to which "the advancing Romanian-Ukrainian troops, according to the command, are aimed solely at protecting the railways necessary for the Russian, Romanian and Ukrainian troops standing on front, and the protection of warehouses and transports of provisions purchased within Bessarabia. Romanians will not interfere in internal affairs, and non-interference is guaranteed by France and other allies... The question of the entry of Romanian troops into Bessarabia has been decided by the Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian command and allies. Rumors that someone called them are false. The Jassy Headquarters could not exist without the railroad, which has been occupied by the Bolsheviks for two weeks now, not letting anything through to the front. Here are the reasons for joining." The population was urged to calm down and surrender their weapons, everyone was guaranteed security, "but on the condition that there would be no action against the Romanians. Any speech will be severely punished. Of course, this was just a propaganda cover. As the Romanian Minister T. Ionescu later stated, "it was said that the troops entered Bessarabia to guard military depots. But the whole world knows that the troops sent to Bessarabia were sent to complete, when and as soon as possible, the final act of annexing Bessarabia. That is the truth." ⁷⁶ On January 10 (23), Romanian troops approached Cahul and

captured it, then massacring the city's defenders. On January 11–12 (24–25), after a short battle, the Romanians occupied Bolgrad. At this time, fighting broke out on the outskirts of Chisinau, where the Soviet detachments repelled the attacks of the Romanian troops moving from Straseni and Ganchest for three days. Help from the troops of the 6th Army did not come up, since the dispatch of units to Chisinau was disrupted by Shcherbachev's headquarters. As a result, on January 13 (26), Romanian troops occupied Chisinau, where the reprisal against the participants of the defense began. On the same day, the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR decided: "1. All diplomatic relations with Romania are interrupted. The Romanian embassy and all agents of the Romanian government in general are sent abroad by the shortest route. 2. The gold fund of Romania stored in Moscow is declared inviolable for the Romanian oligarchy. The Soviet government assumes responsibility for the safety of this fund and will transfer it into the hands of the Rumanian people. 3. The former commander-in-chief of the Romanian Front, Shcherbachev, who rebelled against the revolution, is declared an enemy of the people and outlawed"⁷⁷. On January 14 (27), 1918, General Broshteanu officially entered Chisinau and a Romanian military parade took place, which

was greeted with caution by the population⁷⁸. On January 22 (February 4) "in view of the fact that the Romanians fraudulently entered Russia, occupied Bessarabia, plundering villages and cities in it, in view of the fact that the Council of People's Commissars, having exhausted all possible means, interrupted all relations with Romania, the Central Executive Committee of Rumcheroda decided consider yourself in a position of war with Rumania. On January 24 (February 6), the troops of the Romanian Front and the Odessa District were ordered to "immediately provide armed resistance to the Romanian military detachments that entered Bessarabia, as well as in any other area, when the Romanian troops try to disarm the Soviet troops or seize military material and equipment"⁸⁰. From the outgoing detachments and units of the Romanian Front and local volunteer detachments on the outskirts of Odessa, the formation of the Special Army began (commander - P.S. Lazarev), which included separate units and detachments from the soldiers of the 4th and 6th armies: 5–th and 6th Zaamur cavalry regiments, 1st Dniester infantry regiment, cavalry detachment G.I. Kotovsky, three light batteries (12 guns), a howitzer division (11 guns), an armored detachment, a sapper battalion and small units. These troops were concentrated in the Tiraspol region, in Parkany, Grigoriopol, Dubossary and Slobodzeya there were small garrisons, and the banks of the Dniester were guarded by mounted patrols. South of Chebruchi (25 km south of Tiraspol) to the Black Sea, a detachment of the Army Committee of the 6th Army was deployed. In total, these troops numbered about 5-6 thousand people (including 1,5

Stubborn battles unfolded at Bendery. Soviet troops retreated to the city from near Chisinau, and detachments were formed from the local population. One of these detachments, near the village of Kainari, captured and disarmed a Romanian detachment of 844 people advancing from Reni. When on January 15 (28) the Romanians approached Bendery, on the hills, in the north-west of the city, they were met by self-defense units, which repelled their attacks for several days. Only on January 20 (February 2) the Romanians captured Bender, but the struggle for the city continued. Member of the defense of Bessarabia E.G. Vasilevsky later recalled: "We were forced to retreat to t

bank of the Dniester, where battles unfolded not only with the Romanian invaders, but also with local counter-revolution and banditry. Red Guard detachments from Odessa and Nikolaev began to arrive on the banks of the Dniester. Armed detachments were formed from local workers and peasants to defend the Soviet borders from the invasion of the Romanian boyars and Petliurism ... armaments were drawn up, and by mid-January 1918 an offensive was launched to liberate Bessarabia⁸². The leadership of the Front Department, the Chisinau and Bendery Soviets gathered new forces to the Dniester.

January 23 (February 5) "Romanians began to cross the Dniester to our side. This was the reason that a shootout broke out between the Romanians and our troops. After a little pressure from our troops and with the help of our artillery [...] at 8 o'clock in the morning we managed to take the city of Bendery. The Romanians began to retreat at a rapid pace towards Chisinau"⁸³. The partisan detachment of Kotovsky occupied the Bendery fortress. The population of the city also rose against the invaders. However, having brought up reinforcements, the Romanians again bombarded the city and began the assault. The shelling caused an explosion of the ammunition depot, and the shells flying from the explosions hit the echelon with chemical shells. Under these conditions, the Soviet troops left the city. Having captured Bender on January 25 (February 7), the Romanians crossed the bridges and occupied several villages on the left bank of the Dniester. In these battles in January 1918, the Romanian units lost 141 people (including 3 officers)⁸⁴. In the city, the invaders committed robberies and cracked down on those who supported the Soviet troops. Stocks of grain were taken from Bendery and the surrounding villages to Romania⁸⁵. An unstable balance was established at the front. The Romanian command was afraid of the Soviet offensive, and the Soviet command was afraid of the Romanian strike towards Odessa. Therefore, with the mediation of foreign consuls, the parties entered into negotiations and from 12.00 on January 26 (February 8) concluded a truce for 48 hours.

The most stubborn resistance to the Romanians was provided in the south of Bessarabia, where self-defense units were also created. On January 10 (23), 1918, at an emergency meeting of the congress of peasants and workers' deputies of Budjak city governments, held in Akkerman, it was decided not to recognize the authority of Sfatul Tsarii and fight against the invaders who invaded the territory of Bessarabia. Mobilization was carried out in the Akkerman district. By the evening of January 15 (28) a detachment of UNR troops entered Akkerman, but the next day, the Soviet units arrived in time and drove the Gaidamaks out of the city, pushing them back 30–40 versts⁸⁶. Receiving reinforcements and ammunition from Odessa, Akkerman's defenders were able to hold out until the beginning of March 1918.

Disagreements in the Izmail Soviet led to the fact that the defense of the city was headed by the Union of Front-line Soldiers, which numbered several hundred soldiers and sailors of the port. When on January 21 (February 3) the Romanians approached Ishmael, they were met with cannon and rifle fire. The resistance of the defenders of the city was stubborn. But the occupiers began to gather ships into the Kiliya mouth of the Danube to Ishmael and began shelling the city from the side of the river. For four days there were battles near Izmail and in the city, only on January 24 (February 6) the Romanians managed to capture the city. Breaking into the city, the invaders massacred those defenders who did not have time or did not want to leave⁸⁷. The defenders of Ishmael retreated down the Danube to Kiliya, where self-defense units were also created. Romanian sailors provided assistance to the local population in the defense of the city. Organized by a revolutionary committee headed by G. Stroiĭ, on January 14–15 (27–28) Romanian soldiers and workers seized the military and civilian ships of the Romanian fleet that were here, raised red banners on them and helped defend the city for 10 days. January 25 (February 7), after the city was captured by the invaders, its defenders went to Odessa.

A strong rebuff was given to the invaders near Vilkov on the Kiliya branch of the Danube. On the evening of January 26 (February 8), the messenger ships of the Danube Flotilla, who were on patrol, fired at the Romanian posts in the town of Periprava. The next day, the Romanian monitors of the 2nd Naval Division fired on the city and the roadstead, on which there were transport ships. The gunboat "K-15" returned fire and held back the enemy's onslaught for an hour. During this time, auxiliary vessels left the raid, and other gunboats took positions advantageous for firing. The fire of the Soviet ships damaged one Romanian monitor and shot down a coastal correction point, the rest of the enemy ships retreated up the Danube. On January 27–28 (February 9–10), two Russian gunboats provided artillery support to the local self-defense detachment in Zhebriany. On January 30 (February 12), a detachment of 200 Baltic sailors arrived in Vilkovo, led by a member of the Supreme Russian-Romanian Collegium for Romanian and Bessarabian affairs, military commander A.G. Zheleznyakov. The next day, troops landed on one of the islands at the mouth of the Danube, which prevented the use of Romanian ships and allowed the evacuation of Vilkov to begin in an organized manner. On February 15, the Romanian units captured Vilkovo, and the Detachment of the Danube River Forces began to move to Nikolaev and Kherson. Due to the impossibility of evacuation on the Danube, submarine No. 3, the river minelayer Odessa, the minesweeper Yulia, 8 river gunboats, a messenger ship and a number of auxiliary ships were left.

In the north of Bessarabia, on January 22 (February 4), units of the 1st Romanian Cavalry Division were fired upon on the outskirts of Falesti, and General Skina, who was driving a car with his adjutant, was captured by a self-defense detachment of the village of Obrezha. The prisoners were going to be sent to Balti, but the approaching Romanian cavalymen freed their commander. At 15 o'clock on the same day, the Romanian detachments were fired upon by machine-gun and artillery fire 2 versts south of the city of Balti, which forced them to withdraw. Enemy horse patrols that broke into the city along another road were partially destroyed, and partially retreated. Only by 3 p.m. on January 23 (February 5), after a fierce battle in the city, the Romanians occupied Balti, where arrests and executions began.

"unreliable" elements⁸⁹. On January 24 (February 6), a Romanian detachment entered Soroca, engaged in the requisition of food. On January 30 (February 12), Yampol was occupied by the Polish legion stationed in the area, which provided support to the Romanians⁹⁰. In mid-February 1918, the division of General Skina moved along the railway to Edinet and Ocnita. The detachments defending here, created from the troops of the 8th Russian Army and due to the mobilization of local volunteers, were forced to gradually withdraw to the northeast to the Dniester⁹¹. After the beginning of the Austro-German intervention in Ukraine, the troops of the 8th Army, in which demobilization moods prevailed, began to be withdrawn to Yekaterinoslav.

With the entry of the Romanian troops into Bessarabia, the leadership of Sfatul Tarii felt out of danger. On January 24 (February 6), a declaration was adopted, according to which the MPR was declared "from now on and forever independent", since the UNR declared independence, cutting off Bessarabia from Russia. "Sfatul Tsarii" was declared the supreme body of the country, and the government - the Council of Ministers - was created by him. It was again announced about the speedy convocation of the People's Assembly and the solution of the agrarian question. According to the declaration, "with the arrival of the fraternal Romanian troops on the territory of our republic, a situation has been created in the country that is conducive to peaceful construction in all areas. The Rumanian troops have as their sole purpose the protection of the railroads and grain supplies for the front. The Romanian troops on the territory of the Moldavian Republic have no other purpose. All the rumors that they came to conquer our country and to establish their government here are not true ... "The guarantee of this" is the guarantee of France in agreement with England and America, as well as the statement of the representatives of Rumania "⁹². However, the MPR remained an unrecognized state.

By the beginning of February 1918, Romanian troops occupied the major cities and railway stations of Bessarabia. The central regions of the region were occupied by the 1st cavalry (headquarters - Balti) and 11th infantry (headquarters - Chisinau) divisions, and the southern regions - by the 2nd cavalry (headquarters - Cimislia) and 13th infantry (headquarters - Bolgrad) divisions⁹³. However, in rural areas, the Romanian presence was insignificant, and no one recognized their authority. This situation was reflected in the III Bessarabian provincial peasant congress, which opened in Chisinau on January 18 (31). The Sfatul Tarii leadership hoped to subordinate the congress to their influence and achieve the adoption of a resolution approving the introduction of Romanian troops. However, the congress spoke out against the intervention and condemned the actions of Sfatul Tarii. The elected presidium, on behalf of the congress, addressed the representatives of the Entente countries in Iasi with a protest against the Romanian occupation. Upon learning of this, the Romanian command on January 22 (February 4) broke up the congress, arresting and shooting 45 delegates out of 11,694 actively opposed the occupation.

Germany-Romania-RSFSR In the

meantime, the situation in Ukraine changed and at the peace talks that began on December 9 (22), 1917 in Brest-Litovsk, during which it became clear that no one was interested in general declarations on the rejection of annexations and indemnities⁹⁵. The delegation of the Quadruple Union insisted on the transfer of 150 thousand square meters. km of Russian western lands. Such an openly annexationist program forced the Soviet government to play for time. At the request of the delegation of the Quadruple Union on December 28 (January 10, 1918), representatives of the UNR were admitted to the negotiations in Brest-Litovsk. On December 20, 1917 (January 2, 1918), the Council of People's Commissars suggested that the Central Rada begin negotiations on the settlement of relations, which never took place, since Germany decided to play on the contradictions between Petrograd and Kyiv. On January 11 (24), 1918, the UNR declared its independence, which was immediately recognized by Germany. As a result, on January 27 (February 9), a peace treaty was signed between the UNR and the countries of the Quadruple Union, according to which Kiev received the Kholm region and was supposed to supply Germany and Austria-Hungary in the first half of 1918 with 60 million poods of bread, 2,750 thousand poods of meat, 400 million eggs and other agricultural products and industrial raw materials. Having concluded an agreement with the UNR, Germany in the evening of the same day put forward an ultimatum on the signing of the proposed peace treaty by the Soviet delega

In response, at the evening meeting on January 28 (February 10), the head of the delegation, L.D. Trotsky said that Russia was ending the war, but would not sign peace, and would demobilize the army. At first, the impression was that the countries of the Quadruple Alliance would tacitly agree with this Soviet formula. The Soviet delegation left Brest-Litovsk, and the headquarters of the commander-in-chief gave the order to demobilize the army. However, the expansion of the Civil War in Ukraine and the failure of the UNR troops led the Central Rada on January 30 (February 12) to turn to Germany for support. Under these conditions, on February 18, the German troops resumed the offensive along the entire front. On February 24-28, the Austro-Hungarian troops also went on the offensive, occupying Novoselitsa and Khotyn on the same day. They soon occupied the Ocnita station, where they made contact with the Romanian troops. According to an agreement concluded between the Romanian and Austro-German command, the northern part of Bessarabia (Khotin and part of the Soroca district) was occupied by Austro-German troops. Accordingly, General Skina received an order not to occupy this territory and leave the Chernivtsi-Novoselytsya-Oknitsa-Mogilev-Podolsky railway at the disposal of the Austro-German army. Through the north of Bessarabia, the troops of the 25th Army Corps of the Austro-German troops moved to Kiev, through the central regions to Rybnitsa, Birzulu and Odessa - the 27th Austro-Hungarian Corps, and through Bendery to Odessa - the 52nd German Army Corps.

As a result, on March 3, 1918, the Soviet government had to sign a peace treaty in Brest-Litovsk, proposed to it by the countries of the Quadruple Union. According to the treaty, the RSFSR recognized the independence of Finland

and the UNR and had to withdraw its troops from their territory, as well as from Estonia and Livonia. The western border of Soviet Russia was established along the line Riga-Dvinsk-Druya-Drivyaty-Mikhailishki-Dzevinishki-Dokudova-r. Neman river Zelvyanka - Pruzhany - Vidoml⁹⁷. The Entente did not recognize this treaty, and on March 6, 1918, British troops landed in Murmansk. By March 3, the German-Austrian troops in Ukraine advanced to the line Kamenetz-Podolsk-Vinnitsa-Cherkassy-Kyiv and continued the offensive.

While the Romanian troops continued to seize Bessarabia, Romania negotiated peace with the countries of the Quadruple Alliance. Having an army of almost 700,000, consisting of 15 infantry, 2 cavalry and 4 reserve divisions, on January 15 (28), 1918, Romania informed the Entente countries about the possibility of concluding a separate peace. Naturally, the allies on January 20 (February 2) notified her of their confidence that Romania would continue to fight the common enemy. On January 25 (February 7), the commander of the German-Austrian troops, Field Marshal A. Mackensen, demanded that the Romanian government announce its readiness to enter into peace negotiations within four days. In Iasi, on January 26 (February 8), the government of General A. Averescu was created, and on February 1 (14) peace negotiations began in Bucharest. On February 18, during a personal meeting with Mackensen, Averescu received assurances that nothing threatened the Romanian king, and Romania would be able to maintain its troops in Bessarabia. At the same time, the preliminary conditions for peace negotiations were handed over to the Romanian side: 1. Not to resume wars with the countries of the Quadruple Alliance. 2. Dismiss the Entente officers from the Romanian army and accept a German liaison officer in the Romanian General Staff. 3. Support the export of agricultural products from Ukraine. 4. "The entire Romanian army gets a free hand for operations against the Bolsheviks or against the Petrograd government until the latter signs peace with the Central Powers and Romania. It will be supported, if it becomes necessary from a military point of view, by units of the allied governments .

On February 24, the first official meeting of the delegations of the parties took place. Trying to achieve a softening of the terms of the agreement, the Romanian side referred to the fact that "the historical vocation of the Romanian people is and will be to remain a natural rampart between the Carpathians and the mouths of the Danube against the Slavs"⁹⁹. In addition, the Romanians pointed out that Bessarabia cannot be compensation for Dobruja, since Romania is deprived of access to the sea. But such statements, of course, did not affect the position of the delegation of the Quadruple Alliance, which demanded that King Ferdinand appoint the pro-German A. Margiloman as prime minister of the Iasi government. However, while the Romanian leadership was deciding what to do next, the term of the German ultimatum expired, and on February 28 the German command announced the termination of the truce. True, it agreed to extend it for a day if Romania agreed to the immediate demobilization of 8 of its divisions and to the passage of German-Austrian troops through Moldavia and Bessarabia to Ukraine.

In response, the Romanian side on March 1 announced its consent to negotiations on the basis of mutual concessions, but the German side put forward a new ultimatum, demanding that Romania unconditionally accept all the conditions of the countries of the Quadruple Alliance by 12:00 on March 2. Otherwise, hostilities will be resumed. Since a positive Romanian response was received later than the specified time, the German side on March 3 announced the resumption of hostilities, but, taking into account the consent of Romania already received, the countries of the Quadruple Union demanded to sign a preliminary agreement, a new armistice agreement and a final agreement on the terms of the Quadruple Alliance before 12.00 March 5 union. As a result, on March 5, 1918, in Buft near Bucharest, a preliminary agreement was signed between Romania and the countries of the Quadruple Union, according to which:

1. Romania was inferior to the Quadruple Alliance of Dobruja.
2. The powers of the Quadruple Alliance pledged to provide Romania with a trade outlet to the Black Sea through Constanta.
3. Romania generally agreed to the Austro-Hungarian demands for the correction of the Austro-Hungarian-Romanian border.
4. Romania recognized the economic requirements.
5. Romania undertook to immediately demobilize 8 divisions and entrust the demobilization to the Romanian and German commands. The rest of the Romanian army was to be demobilized after restoration of the Russian-Romanian world.
6. Romania agreed to the immediate withdrawal of its troops from Austro-Hungarian territory.
7. The Romanian government undertook to support with all its might the transportation of troops of the powers of the Quadruple Alliance through Moldavia and Bessarabia to Odessa.
8. Romania undertook to dismiss all Entente officers who were in the Romanian service.
9. The treaty entered into force immediately. Not later than 14 days, Romania is obliged to conclude a final peace treaty
- 100 .

In the meantime, the successful advance of Soviet troops in Ukraine, the formation in Odessa of the Supreme Collegium for Combating the Romanian and Bessarabian Counter-Revolution, in whose hands the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR concentrated all foreign policy issues of the Odessa region, and the arrival in Odessa of H.G. Rakovsky "with the task of driving the Romanian counter-revolutionary forces out of Bessarabia and inciting a revolutionary movement in Romania"¹⁰¹ led to the fact that on February 15 negotiations with the Romanians were interrupted. The Romanian side was presented with an ultimatum on the immediate evacuation of the Romanian troops from Bessarabia, on the extradition of everything captured by them

of Russian military property, on the dispersal of Russian and other national counter-revolutionary detachments, on the extradition of General Shcherbachev, on the punishment of those responsible for the murders and executions of Russian servicemen. Otherwise, the document stated, hostilities would be opened "to protect the Russian revolution"¹⁰².

On February 16 hostilities resumed. However, the attempt of the Red Black Sea-Danube flotilla to break through at the mouth of the Danube near Vilkovo, as well as the attempt of the Soviet troops to capture Bendery, ended in failure¹⁰³. The Romanian attempt to bypass Tiraspol from the south led to battles at Karkmaza and Palenque. On February 17, the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR transferred the Northern Army of M.A. to the Supreme Collegium for Combating the Romanian and Bessarabian Counterrevolution. Muravyov, which was transferred from Kyiv to Odessa by railroad¹⁰⁴. On February 19, Muravyov assumed "the main command of the revolutionary troops operating against Romania", deciding to attack Iasi from three directions: from Mogilev-Podolsky, from Rybnitsa and from Bendery. On February 20, by order of the Soviet command of the Romanian Front, the left bank of the Dniester to the line Tashlyk-Vesely Kut, Razdelnaya-Odessa, as well as the Bendery and Akkerman counties of Bessarabia were declared under martial law. On February 21, all Soviet troops located on the territory from Galati to Sevastopol were united into the 3rd revolutionary army under the command of

P.S. Lazareva¹⁰⁵. On February 26, between Rybnitsa and Slobodka, the troops of P.V. Yegorova collided with the Romanian detachment, which crossed the Dniester, and defeated it with a combined blow. On February 28, "in the Rybnitsa direction, the revolutionary troops occupied the right bank of the Dniester with a dashing blow, overturned the Romanian [occupiers] and advanced 15 versts; captured 18 active guns, a large number of machine guns" and liberated Rezina, Soldanesti and other villages¹⁰⁶. However, the occupation of Zhmerinka on March 3 by Austro-Hungarian and Ukrainian troops forced the Soviet troops to retreat across the Dniester. In the south of Bessarabia, an attempt by the Romanians to force the Dniester on March 1 near the village. Troitsky was repulsed with the help of the local population, but the Soviet units also retreated beyond the Dniester, leaving Akkerman on March 8¹⁰⁷. The total losses of the Romanian troops during the hostilities in January-March 1918 amounted to 488 people (killed - 25, wounded - 312, missing -

The difficult position of Romania in negotiations with the countries of the Quadruple Union, the failures of the Romanian army on the Dniester and the need to gain time led the Romanian leadership to decide to negotiate with the Soviet representatives. In addition, the Soviet authorities in Odessa arrested Romanian political and military figures who were in the city, whom the Romanian government sought to return to Romania. For their part, the Soviet representatives, who believed that "circumstances were favorable for us: the revolutionary ferment in Romania, the general indignation of the Bessarabian population, especially the peasants, against the Romanian occupation, the unwillingness of the Romanian soldiers to fight and the small number of Romanian forces in Bessarabia", were forced from -for the "catastrophic situation as a result of the Austro-German-Ukrainian offensive" also agree to negotiations¹⁰⁹.

Under these conditions, the diplomatic representatives of the Entente in Iasi on February 21 instructed the Italian envoy in Romania, C. Fasciotti, to send the Soviet government an official note on their behalf, which stated that the intervention in Bessarabia "represents a military operation without any political character, undertaken, undoubtedly, with humanitarian goal - to guarantee the supply of provisions for Russian and Romanian troops and the civilian population"¹¹⁰, and suggested that the Romanian command and the Soviet authorities begin negotiations in Odessa with their mediation.

On February 24, the Council of People's Commissars of the Odessa region informed the representatives of the military allied missions in Odessa of their conditions: 1. The Romanian government will make a formal statement that the Romanian army will clear Bessarabia, and first of all Bendery and Zhebriany; that the occupying Romanian army will be reduced to 10,000 men within two months, who will guard the Romanian warehouses and railway lines; that the police protection in the cities and towns will pass into the hands of the local militia; that as the Romanian troops were evacuated, "Russian military forces" would take their place; that the Romanian command will renounce any interference in the internal political life of Bessarabia and will not make arrests and perform the functions belonging to the local elected authorities. "Romania undertakes not to take military or other hostile actions and not to support them in relation to the Russian Federation of Soviets."

2. The entire balance of products in Bessarabia, after satisfying the needs of the local population and Russian military units, will be destined exclusively for Romania. 3. A

commission will be formed from representatives of Russia, Rumania, France, England and the United States to resolve all disputes between Russians and Romanians. In the event that the Romanian army retreats to Russian territory, "it will find shelter and food there." If parallel actions begin against the Quadruple Alliance, then "direct contact will be established between the Higher Military Command of the Russian Soviet Army and the Romanian Command"¹¹¹.

The Romanian side generally accepted this Soviet proposal, but made some changes to it. The wishes of the Romanian government were as follows:

1. All articles of the above proposal are accepted, except for the condition placed in article 1, requiring the immediate evacuation of Bendery.

2. The Romanian government proposed to make a complete exchange of "all Russian prisoners in Romania for

Romanians who are in Russia", and release all Russians interned in Romania, and Romanians in Russia.

3. The proposal to create an international commission was accepted, but Russians and Romanians were excluded from it. The commissions were to operate in Odessa, Kyiv, Moscow, Petrograd, Iasi and Galati.

4. The Romanian government demanded the return of all funds and food taken from the inter-allied purchasing commissions in Russia, and the direction of food to Romania. It also sought permission for the allied purchasing commissions to continue in Russia the purchase of food for the Romanian population, which could not be purchased in Bessarabia .

The Soviet side agreed with these proposals, and on March 5, 1918, the following declaration was signed in Odessa: "The conditions of the Government of Romania, introducing some changes to our peace proposals, have been accepted. From the moment the Romanian Government confirms the receipt of this document, we will consider that peace between Russia and Romania has been restored. Together with the Soviet representatives, the declaration was signed by Colonel of the Canadian Army D.V. Boyle, who, together with Captain Hill, on behalf of the Romanian ambassador in Petrograd, was able in November 1917 to take part of the Romanian gold fund from Moscow to Iasi¹¹⁴. In addition, on the same day, a protocol was signed: "The Supreme Autonomous Board, Rumcherod, the Council of People's Commissars of the Odessa Region, the Executive Committee of Soviets declare that they consider the military conflict between Russia and Romania settled on the basis of the conditions proposed by us in our response of February 24 1918, and on the basis of changes made by the Romanian Government, according to a declaration signed by Gen. Averescu - Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Romanian Kingdom. At the same time, we take note of the declaration of Mr. Colonel Boyle that the exchange of Russian prisoners for Romanian ones extends to all prisoners without exception, by virtue of which we sign the present protocol . On the same day, the Romanian government in Iasi signed the "Agreement between the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and Romania", which committed

itself to "cleanse Bessarabia within two months" and contained all the conditions indicated above. On March 8, the agreement was handed over to the Soviet side through intermediaries, and on March 9, the Soviet representatives also signed it¹¹⁶ . According to Averescu's telegram of March 8, "The Romanian Government takes into account the collective declaration of the Supreme Autonomous Board, Rumcherod, the Council of People's Commissars of the Odessa Region, the Executive Committee of Soviets and the High Command of the Revolutionary Army of the South Russian Front of March 5, 1918 [...] and considers the conflict resolved from today."¹¹⁷ Accordingly, on March 12, the Soviet troops on the Dniester were ordered to cease hostilities and await the departure of the Romanian troops from Bessarabia . The treaty was of great importance for Soviet Russia, as it was the second international act after the Brest-Litovsk treaty in which it was recognized as a sovereign power, and the first treaty with a country that was part of the Entente. Explaining his decision to sign an agreement

with the RSFSR, Averescu in June 1918 said in parliament: "Russia is sick, no doubt, she is very sick, but Russia has not disappeared, and she will recover.

We, a small power, should not take advantage of this state of paralysis in which our neighbor is. However, according to the Minister of Foreign Affairs M. Arion, Averescu was simply afraid of Russia, but she "will not be reborn again", and the Bolsheviks should not be afraid¹²⁰ .

The capture of Ukraine by the German-Austrian troops created an advantage on the side of the Romanian interventionists in Bessarabia. The occupation of the left bank of the Dniester by the German-Austrian troops and the occupation of Odessa on March 14–15, 1918 cut off Bessarabia from the RSFSR. Soviet troops, Red Guard and partisan detachments were forced to retreat¹²¹. Under these conditions, Romania was not going to fulfill the agreement concluded on March 5–9, 1918, but took further steps to secure this region for itself. Of the entire Soviet-Romanian treaty, only the clause on the exchange of prisoners and internees was fulfilled. On March 19–24, 1918, in Sulina, 92 Romanian senators, members of parliament and an officer were exchanged for 73 officers and soldiers of the Russian army from Romanian camps. As the former elected commander of the 4th Army, I. Kondurushkin, later recalled, "it was enough to look at our exchange in Sulina at the Romanian senators brought from Russia: round muzzles, top hats, canes, shirt-fronts, mountains of luggage, and compare us with them: dirty, ragged, shoddy, overgrown with hair, ripped off to the last extra pair of soldier's footcloths, three months without a bath and fresh linen to say: "What beasts are the Bolsheviks and what enlightened Europeans are the Romanian boyars!"¹²²

Annexation of Bessarabia and the Treaty of Bucharest

Meanwhile, on March 6, peace negotiations between Romania and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance resumed. On March 9, the Romanian delegation was presented with a list of demands from the countries of the Quadruple Union. In order to make the Romanians more accommodating, they were promised support in the annexation of Bessarabia. "We are ready to provide our diplomatic support to Romania in order to obtain Bessarabia, and in this case, Romania will be able to gain much more than to lose," Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister O. Chernin told the Romanian King Ferdinand on February 27. Horstman, a representative of the Austro-Hungarian headquarters, told Margiloman the same thing during the negotiations: "We will help, if necessary, even with troops, so that you capture Bessarabia. You fight against the Bolsheviks in Bessarabia, and we will fight against them in

Ukraine. We have the same interests."123 .

For agreeing to the annexation of Bessarabia by Romania, the German command demanded the voluntary transfer of all Romanian artillery to Germany. In a conversation with German diplomats on March 29, 1918, Margiloman "said to Kuhlmann: now give us freedom of action in Bessarabia. He replied, smiling, with a wave of his hand, meaning: I have nothing against it. I suggested to Chernin that our destroyers located on the Danube be placed at the disposal of Admiral Hoffmann, who asked them for mutual action at Ochakov against the Bolsheviks. Chernin was delighted with this proposal. When discussing the issue of the occupation of Bessarabia, an agreement was reached that the Khotinsky district would remain occupied not by the Romanian, but by the Austrian troops and that the Austro-German procurement authorities would be able to seize grain from the peasants of that part of Bessarabia that was occupied by Romania. Thus,

during the negotiations, it became clear that Germany and its allies would not object to the seizure of Bessarabia by Romania. Under these conditions, the Romanian leadership decided, even before concluding an agreement with the countries of the Quadruple Union, to make the accession of Bessarabia to Romania a formally accomplished fact. Having found out that the representatives of the Entente countries are also supporters of the accession of Bessarabia to Romania, the Romanian government decided to expedite the formal reso

For its part, the leadership of the MPR in mid-March found out the favorable attitude of the Entente representatives to the planned annexation of Bessarabia to Romania. The conversation of the President of the MPR, Incults, with the French representative in Iasi Saint-Oler on March 15 showed that there would be no objections from the Western allies of Romania. "He asked me about Russia for a long time," Inkulets wrote, "and I expressed my following point of view to him: the allies could greatly help the formation of small states, like Ukraine, Georgia, Poland, states that would always be grateful to France." As for Bessarabia, Sainte-Oler considered it necessary that it become part of Romania: "Join as soon as possible"125 .

On April 2, the President and Prime Minister of the MPR, who visited Iasi, were informed that, with the consent of the Quadruple Alliance and the Entente, Romania was going to annex Bessarabia. On April 5, they were given a specific plan of "conditional accession", which was supposed to be turned into a transitional step towards the proclamation of the final accession of Bessarabia to Romania. Both senior officials of the MPR approved this intention and went to Chisinau to prepare the corresponding decision of the "Sfatul Tarii", in which only 86 deputies were ready to vote "correctly". Margiloman, who arrived in Chisinau on April 8, ordered a meeting of Sfatul Tarii to be held on April 9 to vote for the accession of Bessarabia to Romania126. The Romanian leadership believed that the "voluntary" accession of Bessarabia to Romania would remove the problem of fulfilling the agreement with the RSFSR127 .

As General Skina later recalled, "according to a pre-designed program, the meeting of Sfatul Tsarii was supposed to begin at 11 and end by one in the afternoon: after the vote, Prime Minister Margiloman should be received at a solemn meeting and read the message of the king. But hour after hour passed, anxiety begins to seize the head of government and those accompanying him ... Finally, they inform that you need to be patient, because the discussion about the conditions for accession is very heated, but senseless. In the end, after seven hours of waiting, the head of government is invited to the Sfatul Tsarii meeting room ... We cannot forget the painful impression that we had from the official accession ceremony on the day of March 27 [April 9], 1918"128 .

The declaration on the accession of Bessarabia to Romania provoked a protest from many members of Sfatul Tarii. The peasant faction, which for the most part consisted of Moldovans, refused to vote for this declaration. She stated that the peasants did not want to secede from Russia, that Sfatul Tarii did not have the authority to resolve this issue, and that only the question of allied relations with Romania could be discussed at this meeting. The issue of accession could be decided by the Constituent Assembly or a national referendum129 . Deputies representing other nationalities also opposed the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania. The MP, speaking on behalf of the Bulgarians, stated that the Bessarabian Bulgarians and Gagauz also believe that Sfatul Tsarii is not competent to decide this issue and that the deputies from the Bulgarians and Gagauz will not vote for joining.

But the Sfatul Tarii leadership and supporters of unification with Romania answered these statements that they were in vain, since Romania would turn Bessarabia into its province anyway, and, trying to intimidate the peasant faction, they said that if the Bessarabian peasantry refused to support the Romanians' claims to Bessarabia , then they will enter into an open alliance with the Bessarabian landowners, and in this case the situation of the Bessarabian peasants will worsen. Deception and the threat of armed reprisal in case of protest, and at the same time demagogic promises of agrarian reform in case of support for the claims of the occupiers, forced the majority of Sfatul Tarii members who were against joining to abstain from voting. As the well-known Romanianizer of Bessarabia O. Gibu later admitted, "apart from an insignificant number of deputies, no one even thought of separating their province from Russia and annexing it to

Romania"130 . The means of influencing the deputies was also the announcement of an oral roll call, despite the demands of the deputies for a secret ballot. Officers of the Romanian army were in the meeting room, the Sfatul Tarii building was cordoned off by troops. But even in such conditions, 86 voted in favor of joining.

deputies (53%), 3 voted "against", 38 abstained, and 35 left the hall and did not vote¹³¹. As a result, on April 9, 1918, the declaration "Sfatul Tarii" was adopted, according to which "the Moldavian Democratic Republic (Bessarabia) within its borders between the Prut, Dniester, Danube, Black Sea and the old borders with Austria, torn off by Russia from old Moldavia one hundred and years ago, now, by virtue of historical rights, by virtue of brotherhood by blood and nationality, and on the basis of the principle of self-determination of peoples, from now on and forever unites with its motherland, Romania" while maintaining autonomy¹³².

Speaking on April 10 at a meeting of the peasant faction, deputy Kokirle said: "We, gentlemen, traitors to peasant interests, have not justified the bright hopes that the peasantry has placed on us! What shall we say to our fathers and brothers? How can we look them in the eyes? After all, there can be no question of land and will!! All the holy conquests of the great Russian Revolution were buried, if not forever, then for a long time. As for myself, I will say that I greatly regret my act!" Then deputy Savchuk spoke: "I, gentlemen, have never spoken in our faction, and now I cannot keep silent: when I learned that the parliament voted for a union with Romania, then all those people who gave their best years appeared before my eyes in the service of the Revolution; I imagined their corpses rotting in Siberia. I can hear their reproach that we so easily gave up all those great conquests for which they sacrificed their lives .

On April 10, in a letter to Incults, the Romanian king Ferdinand wrote: "A wonderful dream has come true. I thank the Lord God from the bottom of my heart for the fact that in such difficult days I had a chance to experience the joy of the return of the Bessarabians to their motherland. I am sincerely grateful to you and Sfatul Tarii, whose patriotic efforts contributed to this success." On April 22, a royal decree confirmed the decision to unite Bessarabia with Romania, and the "distinguished" Inculets and Chugureanu received ministerial positions without portfolios in the Romanian government¹³⁴.

Upon learning of the Sfatul Tarii decision, the Soviet leadership announced on April 12 that "the attempt of the Romanian oligarchy to annex Bessarabia is ... not only a brazen violation of a solemn contractual obligation, but also a violation of the will of the entire population of Bessarabia"¹³⁵. On April 18, in a note to the Romanian government, Moscow pointed out that Margiloman's statement on the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania "is not only a challenge to the Russian Federative Soviet Republic, but also a flagrant violation of the agreement concluded by your predecessor with Russia on the cleansing of Bessarabia within 2 months." This decision is devoid of "any international legal force whatsoever. Forcible annexation to Romania does not destroy the unity and solidarity of the working masses of Bessarabia and Russia"¹³⁶.

But the UNR also laid claim to Bessarabia. As early as July 18, 1917, Kyiv declared that "Ukraine extends from the Carpathians to the Caucasus and that Bessarabia is its integral part"¹³⁷. On April 20, 1918, the UNR government protested against the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania, and on May 11 broke off diplomatic relations with it and imposed economic sanctions on the Dniester, lifted only after Romania turned to Germany. In the summer of 1919, the government of Romania, despite the proposals of the Entente to support Denikin's army, preferred to assist the UNR, since it was interested in the existence of a buffer state between Bessarabia and Russia, which would prevent the reunification of the region with Russia under any regime in the latter. On July 26, 1919, in exchange for the promised support of Bucharest in the supply of weapons and ammunition, the Petliura government of the UPR recognized Bessarabia as part of Romania¹³⁸.

Meanwhile, on May 7, 1918, the Margiloman government signed a peace treaty with the countries of the Quadruple Alliance, which consolidated the regime of colonial exploitation of Romania and turned it from a sovereign state into a dependent country. According to this treaty, Romania lost Dobruja, the southern part of which, with a small increment, went to Bulgaria, and the rest passed into the joint possession of the powers of the Quadruple Alliance. The port of Constanta and the Constanta-Cernavoda railway line fell into German hands. Romania transferred a strip of territory along the Carpathians in 6 thousand square meters. km of Austria-Hungary. In total, Romania lost almost 30 thousand square meters. km of territory, and received Bessarabia (44.5 thousand sq. km). The treaty provided that the European Commission for the Administration of the Danube Mouths, set up at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, would be replaced by a new commission in which Germany, Austria-Hungary and their allies would have priority. Customs policy and trade along the Danube were to depend on the powers of the Quadruple Alliance. Each country included, according to this agreement, in the new Danube Commission, received the right to keep two warships in Galati and Braila. According

to the plans of the German command, Romania to the river. Seret was supposed to be under the control of the German occupation forces. On the territory from Seret to the Dniester, the German command deployed the Romanian army, which was supposed to have German officers with it. After the ratification of the treaty, during additional negotiations, the term for the evacuation of the occupying troops will be determined, the number of which was determined at 6 divisions and "economic formations" maintained at the expense of Romania. According to the agreement, the Romanian army was limited to 20 thousand people in infantry, 9 thousand in artillery and 3.2 thousand in cavalry, reduced to 8 divisions. All other heavy weapons and machine guns were handed over to warehouses in the occupied territory, but under Romanian protection. In addition, 2 infantry and 2 cavalry divisions and several battalions of chasseurs operating in Bessarabia remained "as part of the wartime [states] until the borders of Romania are no longer endangered as a result of military operations conducted by the allied powers in Ukraine"¹³⁹. In fact, their number does not

was not regulated, which allowed the Romanian command to keep almost 200 thousand people in the army.

Romania was obliged to transfer to the hands of Austria-Hungary and Germany, in ownership or lease for 90 years, places along the banks of the Danube, suitable for the construction of commodity and coal warehouses, shops, loading facilities, repair shops and railway lines. The countries of the Quadruple Union leased the oil fields of Romania for 90 years. At the same time, the monopoly on the trade in Romanian oil and oil products passed into the hands of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The shipyards in Turnu Severin were transferred to Austria-Hungary on a long-term lease for a meager fee. At the same time, Austria-Hungary was allowed to have a railway on the territory of Romania from the border to Turnu Severin. Similar enterprises in Dobruja were transferred to Germany under the same conditions. Romania had to pay for all requisition bonds issued by the powers of the Quadruple Alliance in the occupied Romanian territory during the entire war (in the amount of 1,300 million lei). The total amount of indemnity that Romania had to pay exceeded 5 billion

lei. The forests and timber industry of Rumania fell into the hands of the German monopolies. The treaty turned Romania into an agrarian appendage of Germany. Until 1926, Romania had to supply all its agricultural products only to Germany at predetermined low prices. The Romanian government was told that all Romanian grain reserves were passing into the hands of the Germans, and Romania could be supplied from Bessarabia. "The acquisition of Bessarabia returns you 10 times more than what you lose," said the head of the German delegation, R. Kulman, to Margiloman¹⁴⁰.

The occupied Romanian territory became the object of open robbery. In total, during the occupation period, 2,161,905 tons of food and fodder, 83,000 horses, 220,500 cattle, 317,000 pigs, 1,483,000 sheep, 41,000 goats, 1,450 donkeys were exported from Romania to the countries of the Quadruple Union. and mules, 1,140,809 tons of oil, 57,475 tons of iron and metals, 93,945 tons of salt, 201,153 tons of timber¹⁴¹. Although the Peace of Bucharest was approved on June 28 by the Chamber of Deputies, and on July 4 by the Romanian Senate, it never entered into force, since it was not signed by the king. This, however, did not prevent the Romanian authorities from compensating their losses at the

expense of Bessarabia. Only during the first two months of the occupation in Bessarabia, about 25 thousand people died¹⁴². On July 1, 1918, a state of siege was introduced in the region, and on August 4, it was ordered to introduce the Romanian language for signboards and posters¹⁴³. Even the Romanianophile N.A. Alexandri believed that "throughout the country, a groan stands from end to end: lawlessness, mockery, mockery such as have not been, perhaps, from a century. The times of tsarist absolutism seem almost like paradise. Under these conditions, the proverb popular in Bessarabia becomes clear: "Romanian is not a nationality, but a profession." During the 18 months of the Romanian occupation, Bessarabia became much more tied to Russia than during the 100 years of Russian domination. The brutal occupation regime, robberies, requisitions, repressions aroused in the Bessarabian population a desire to fight the Romanian invaders¹⁴⁵. As V. Mayborodov, who visited Bessarabia in the spring of 1919 as part of the French troops, recalled, the population unanimously scolded the Romanians, and one Moldavian peasant expressed a common opinion: "Some gypsy came and it seems that he is my brother, and what kind of brother is he when I am a Russian person. The measures of the Romanian occupation authorities "russified the Moldovan population rather than the Russian government over the hundred years of its rule" - all the locals tried to speak Russian. And if on the left bank of the Dniester the Romanians were waiting for liberation from the Bolsheviks, then the Bessarabians were waiting for the Bolsheviks to be liberated from the Romanians¹⁴⁶. In all districts of Bessarabia there were underground cells, partisan groups and detachments. That is, in fact, there was a small war with the Romanian troops in the region. "The situation is difficult," the influential Romanian historian N. Iorga admitted in his diary. Peasants hate order. Even 10% of the population does not have the

"Greater Romania"

Meanwhile, on August 8, 1918, the Entente troops launched the Amiens operation, during which they managed to break through the German front, which meant the final turning point in the war on the Western Front. It became clear to the German command that it would not be possible to win the war. On September 15, the Entente troops launched an offensive on the Thessaloniki front. On September 29, Bulgaria capitulated, on October 30 - Turkey, on November 3 - Austria-Hungary. Under these conditions, on November 9, the Danube army of the Entente crossed the Danube at Nikopol, Zhurzhev and Sistov and entered Romanian territory. In the evening of the same day, the new Romanian government of General K. Coanda demanded that Field Marshal Mackensen withdraw German troops from Romania within 24 hours¹⁴⁸. On November 11, Germany signed an armistice - the First World War ended.

During the beginning of the revolution and the collapse of Austria-Hungary, the Romanian national movement also declared itself. On October 18, 1918, a declaration on the sovereign rights of the Romanian people of Transylvania was read in the Budapest parliament. On October 31, the Romanian National Council of Transylvania was formed in Arad, which announced its refusal to comply with the orders of the Hungarian government. In the second half of November, elections were held in Transylvania for the Grand National Assembly, which opened on December 1 in Alba Iulia. On November 23, the Romanian army entered Transylvania and occupied it up to the line of the upper reaches of the river. Mures. On December 2, having received permission from the French command, the chief of the Romanian General Staff, General Prezan, ordered the troops to be sent to the central regions of Transylvania, where they were met as defenders from the withdrawn German troops who were robbing the local population. It is clear that Hungarian-Romanian relations have worsened. In Arad, there were clashes between Romanian troops and Hungarian self-defense units, and there

the French units had to enter, which also occupied Banat, and on December 10, 1918 they entered Szeged. On December 24, the 6th Romanian Army occupied Cluj, and by mid-January 1919 reached the line Sziget-Nadbanya-Zilakh-Chucha-Vashkoh¹⁴⁹. In this environment, the National Assembly of Transylvania decided to unite with Romania, but demanded that Bucharest carry out electoral and agrarian

reforms. The situation in Bukovina was more complicated. On October 27, 1918, the National Assembly of the Romanians of Bukovina was convened in Chernivtsi, which created the National Council and the Executive Committee, headed by J. Flondor, who promoted the idea of joining Romania. In response, the Ukrainian population held a National Council in Chernivtsi on November 16, which spoke in favor of unification with Ukraine. The situation in the city worsened. However, the 8th Romanian Infantry Division (8,073 military personnel) of General J. Zadik from the 4th Army Corps, introduced into Bukovina on November 18–24, “settled” this problem, and the General Congress of Bukovina, convened on November 28, consisting of 74 local Romanians, 7 Germans, 6 Poles and 13 Ukrainians loyal to Romania made the “correct” decision to “unconditionally join”

Romania¹⁵⁰. On November 18, the Austro-German troops left Northern Bessarabia. The Romanian Prime Minister Marghiloman “telegraphed an order to cross the neutral border in the north of Bessarabia and take it to Khotyn with the army and civil authorities ... It was decided to take all the empty places and consider as such the places previously occupied by troops who had demobilized or driven out the officers.” The 1st cavalry division from the 5th Army Corps moved to the Khotyn district from the Balti district of Bessarabia, and other units from Romania across the Lipkansky bridge to the Larga station and to Khotyn, which was occupied by them on November 23, 1918. The commandant of Khotyn, Major G Popescu ordered the population to surrender all weapons, including hunting rifles, gunpowder, shot and knives. By the same order, all Russian signboards were ordered to be removed everywhere until November 28. The population was obliged to pay taxes to the invaders. Food requisitions began. A kilometer-long zone was created along the Dniester, into which residents were forbidden to enter¹⁵¹.

Already in the autumn of 1918, Romania tried to get the Entente countries to recognize the 1916 agreement on the transfer of Transylvania, Bukovina and other territories of the former Austria-Hungary to it. However, the countries of the Entente, referring to the conclusion of a separate peace between Romania and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance, declared that the agreement of 1916 had lost its force and the question of Romanian territorial claims would be considered again at a peace conference. Back in July 1918, the “National Romanian Committee” was created in Paris to promote the “true sentiments and interests of the Romanians”, headed by N. Titulescu, according to whom “we [Romanians] are part of the Entente guard in the East, that old guard, who always follows her without grumbling, we are those who love without demanding love in return, we are those who believe without pretending to go to paradise for it. Of course, these beautiful words should have been backed up by concrete actions in order to force the peace conference to heed the opinion of Bucharest.

Hoping to achieve the recognition of Bessarabia for Romania at the forthcoming peace conference in Paris, the Romanian government hastened to violate the act of April 9, 1918 on the autonomy of Bessarabia.

In November 1918, the Romanian authorities decided to stage an act of recognition of the unconditional annexation of Bessarabia to Romania in “Sfatul Tarii”. Preparations for the abolition of the April 9 act were carried out by the General Commissar of Bessarabia, General A. Voitoian, without spending too much money and time. He expelled from Bessarabia those Sfatul Tarii deputies who were clearly opposed to the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania, and on December 6 he invited the rest to his place and addressed them with the following words: “I invited you to talk to you as a Romanian with the Romanians, find out your desires and aspirations and explain to you the present state of the Bessarabian question. The entire conversation must remain between us. We Romanians can swear, but no one should know about it. We must come to Sfatul Tarii with ready-made solutions. According to the March 27th [April 9th] act you have provincial autonomy, now you must renounce it. We need a renunciation of autonomy in the face of a peace conference. We must come there united and not give any reason for criticism ... You, for example, - Voitoianu turned to deputy N. Alexandri, - I know that you hesitated all summer, and I hope that now everything is clear to you and your hesitations, which are explained by the Russification provocation, because otherwise we will have to take special measures...”¹⁵³ Without a preliminary announcement in the press and without notifying the

deputies on December 8, 1918 at 14 o'clock in the afternoon, the chairman of “Sfatul Tsarii” Khalippa posted an announcement on the door building “Sfatul Tarii” that at 16 o'clock on the same day the meeting opens. The meeting was opened despite the fact that only a few dozen deputies were present, mostly from the “Moldavian bloc”. Speaking on behalf of the peasant faction, V. Tsyganko protested against the illegal convocation of Sfatul Tarii and stated that due to the lack of a quorum, this session could not be competent. Deputy I. Pascallutsa made a similar protest. However, the majority of those present were supporters of the occupiers, and they voted for the session to be open. The same “majority” (48 deputies with a quorum of 54), rigged by Khalippa and Voitoian, elected a presidium from among themselves. The next day, the deputies who did not participate in the presidium elections protested and, after refusing to re-elect the presidium, left

the meeting. Only the agrarian issue was on the agenda of Sfatul Tarii, so after the break, the departed deputies returned to the meeting room. The meeting began at about 20.00 and by 1 o'clock in the morning tired the deputies, whose number gradually decreased. At 2.30 at night, “at the end of the reading of the bill, without any warning, the presiding Khalippa read the resolution

about the desire to join Bessarabia to Romania without any conditions, the destruction of the autonomy of Bessarabia. There were 46 deputies [out of 162] in the meeting room. Some of the deputies began to applaud, drowning out the chairman's question: "Who is against, who abstained?" Representatives of some of the deputies of the peasant faction, protesting, ask for the floor to make a statement. The presiding Khalippa does not give a word, and the act of the greatest national importance is considered to be decided in the complete absence of a quorum (46 deputies, of which a part, headed by deputy Vuchushkan, expressed their protest). The general commissar, General Voitoianu, who was then called by telephone, immediately read the royal decree on the closing of the Sfatul Tarii session upon his arrival. It happened already at five and a half in the morning. After that, as modern Romanian authors note, "having fulfilled the mission for which it was actually created", "Sfatul Tarii" was disbanded¹⁵⁵.

This is how the declaration of December 10, 1918 was adopted: "Following the unification with mother Romania of Bukovina, Transylvania, Banat and the Hungarian regions inhabited by Romanians within the borders of the Danube and Tisza, Sfatul Tarii announces that Bessarabia renounces the conditions of unity established on 27 March [April 9], being confident" that in Romania everyone will be provided with a democratic regime. Therefore, without waiting for the convocation of the Romanian Constituent Assembly, "Sfatul Tarii" "annuls all the conditions of the act of March 27 and announces, without any conditions, the accession of Bessarabia to Greater Romania"¹⁵⁶. However, a group of deputies of the already dissolved regional council "in the interests of exposing unprecedented and unacceptable political blackmail, violence and falsification" drew up an act stating that they consider all the decisions of the Sfatul Tsarii session on December 8-10, 1918, "in view of the obvious offenses committed, bordering on deceit – invalid, illegal and protest with all their energy against the renunciation of autonomy as against an act of violence against the will of the peoples inhabiting Bessarabia"¹⁵⁷.

Battles in the Ukraine and

Hungary In November 1918, the military-political situation in southern Russia changed significantly due to the defeat of Germany and the end of the First World War. The withdrawal of German troops from Ukraine led, on the one hand, to the creation on November 13 of a new government (Directory) of the UNR, which moved to Kiev on December 14, and on the other hand, to the issuance of a decree on the restoration of Soviet power in Ukraine by the government of the Ukrainian SSR on November 29¹⁵⁸.

At the same time, on November 16–23, 1918, a meeting was held in Iasi of representatives of England, France, Italy, the USA, Romania, Sfatul Tarii, the UNR and a number of anti-Bolshevik Russian public and political figures, who appealed to the allies to send Entente troops to the south of Russia. On November 21, the allies decided to support the UNR against the Bolsheviks, to occupy Odessa, Sevastopol, Kyiv and Kharkov. Accordingly, already on November 25, English ships arrived in Sevastopol, and on November 27, French ships arrived in Odessa. On November 27, the UNR asked the Entente to send their representatives and troops to Kiev and Odessa to Kiev and occupy the railway connecting them¹⁵⁹. The Romanian leadership was ready to transfer 188 guns, 900 machine guns, 120 thousand rifles, ammunition and other equipment of the former Russian Romanian Front to the local formations of the Volunteer Army¹⁶⁰. On December 9, the goals of the Entente

intervention were determined: to protect their interests and save Ukraine from the actions of the Bolshevik forces from the north. To do this, it was necessary to capture the bases on the Black Sea and move from them and from Bessarabia to the basins of the Dnieper and Don¹⁶¹. On December 17, a French infantry division landed in Odessa. On January 20, 1919, Greek troops began to arrive in the ports of the Black Sea. In the meantime, by the beginning of January 1919, the troops of the Soviet Ukrainian Front entered Kharkov and reached the approaches to Chernigov, Konotop, Sumy, Akhtyrka, Merefa, Zmiev and Kupiansk. Chernigov and Bakhmach were occupied on January 12, Poltava on January 19, Yekaterinoslav on January 26. On January 16, the UNR declared war on the RSFSR, but the local population greeted the Red Army with great enthusiasm. The military-political

changes in Ukraine increased the hopes of the Bessarabian population for a speedy liberation. Various underground groups began to prepare for action against the Romanian occupiers. The most significant event at this time was the uprising in the Khotyn region. On the night of January 19, a partisan detachment under the command of G. Barbuts, with 5 guns and 30 machine guns, crossed the Dniester and occupied the Ataki place north of Khotyn, defeating the Romanian unit stationed there. The local population spontaneously came out in support of the partisans. In the first days of the uprising, the rebels occupied most of the county, and on January 23 they liberated Khotyn from the Romanians. However, disagreements in the Directory created to lead the uprising led to the fact that for the most part the uprising remained unorganized. Most of the members of the Directory advocated the creation of the People's Democratic Republic of Lesser Bukovina, which would be part of the UNR on the basis of autonomy. On January 22, the Directory addressed a note to England, France, Italy, Germany, the USA, Austria, the Ukrainian People's Republic and the RSFSR, in which "on behalf of all the affected Bessarabian people" it brought "to the attention of your government and people what the Romanian government has done to all the Bessarabian people unprecedented violence. [...] Throwing off the yoke of tsarism on an equal basis with other peoples, Bessarabia felt that a ray of freedom shone for her too. But at a time when freedom had become an inalienable property of all peoples, when it remained to enjoy the fruits of freedom, the imperialist state of Romania, neighboring Bessarabia, imposed a heavy yoke on Bessarabia, annexing [it to]

themselves, in the words of the Romanian government, "for all eternity", without having absolutely no right and grounds for this, and against the will of the Bessarabian people. This yoke is now being thrown off by the people themselves..." The Directory asked these countries to help the Bessarabian people "to hold a referendum and only when the will of the people becomes clear, to join this or that people of the state"¹⁶³.

The senior lieutenant of the English fleet M. McLaren, who arrived in Khotyn on January 22, was used as a liaison with European countries. After reviewing the situation on the ground, McLaren said: "Now I see and can testify how the population joined Romania and what it endured if it decided to revolt." Naturally, the 8th Infantry and 1st Cavalry Divisions were thrown against the rebels. Having coordinated the situation with the UNR government, the Romanian command launched an attack on Khotyn on January 27. The troops destroyed and burned the villages, shot anyone suspicious or able to bear arms. The Khotyn uprising had a significant resonance in Europe and caused certain fears in Bucharest. Much later, I. Antonescu recalled this situation: "In 1919, we almost lost Bessarabia through the fault of General Davidoglu, who destroyed seven villages and killed a lot of people. It is known that for this reason the peace conference in Paris took up the revision of the Bessarabian question in order not to give us Bessarabia, because we are savages. On February 1, Romanian troops recaptured Khotyn. During the suppression of the uprising, 15 thousand people suffered to one degree or another, of which, according to official Romanian data, more than 5 thousand died. More than 54,000 local residents fled to the left bank of the Dniester¹⁶⁶. The losses of the Romanian troops amounted to 369 people (killed - 159, wounded - 93, missing - 117)¹⁶⁷.

Meanwhile, the Soviet troops of the Ukrainian Front continued their offensive towards the Dniester. On February 1, the Ukrainian Red Army entered Kremenchug and Brovary, on February 5 - in Kyiv, on February 7 - in Elisavetgrad, on February 10 - in Cherkassy, on February 20 - in Fastov. True, this rapid advance of the troops of the Ukrainian Front towards Odessa and Tiraspol turned out to be completely unexpected for the Soviet command. It turned out that the UNR troops opposing the Soviet units were not ready for real battles. They partly went over to the side of the Red Army, and partly went home. So, the detachment of ataman N.A. Grigoriev on February 2 went over to the side of the Soviet troops, was reorganized into the 1st brigade of the Zadneprovskaya division and turned out to be the main force advancing in the direction of the Black Sea coast. The detachments of the French, Greek, Polish and Volunteer armies defending in this area, approximately 12 thousand people, were to a certain extent propagandized by the local Bolsheviks. Moreover, France was generally inclined to withdraw its troops, which constituted the main force in southern Russia, to their homeland. On March 14, 1919, the commander of the Ukrainian Front, V.A. Antonov-

Ovseenko set before the troops of the Kyiv Group of Forces the task of "accelerating the liquidation of the Petliura gangs and reaching the Dniester, occupying Mogilev, developing operations to the east to the Kamenets-Podolsk line. Concentrate the 2nd [th] division [in the area] Rybnitsa-Balta-Olgopol. It is desirable to prevent the destruction of the Zhmerinka-Balta route for the hasty transfer of the cavalry brigade to Balta. Organize the northern part of Bessarabia to cover the crossing on the Dniester and the subsequent attack on Chisinau. There will be a special order about the latter."¹⁶⁸ On March 17, the commander of the Ukrainian Front, by his order No. 405, informed his troops: "It has been decided to advance on Odessa. Kyiv group - a barrier from Galicia, access to the Dniester, the occupation of crossings from Mogilev to Rybnitsa inclusive. The organization of the uprising in Bessarabia is a barrier against Romania. Strike with a strong group [on] Chisinau-Bendery-Tiraspol. The Kharkov group is to concentrate on Golty-Voznesensk, strike on Odessa under the cover of units occupying Khristinovka-Uman, advancing [on] Zyatkovtsi"¹⁶⁹.

On March 7, 1919, Soviet troops entered Berdichev and Kazatin, on March 10 - in Kherson, on March 14 - in Nikolaev, on March 15 - in Zhitomir and Uman, on March 18 - in Vinnitsa, on March 20 - in Zhmerynka, on March 30 - in Vapnyarka. By the end of March 1919, the line of the Ukrainian Front, which included 88.7 thousand people (of which about 40 thousand bayonets and cavalry), increased from 550 km to 1000 km¹⁷⁰. By the evening of March 30, 1919, the 1st separate Bessarabian brigade was deployed on the Novaya Ushitsa-Mogilev-Podolsky-Yampol front, which was transferred on April 24 to the 1st Ukrainian Soviet Army¹⁷¹.

Meanwhile, on February 26, 1919, the Supreme Council of the Entente decided to create a neutral zone between Hungary and Romania from Transcarpathia to the Danube. However, the Entente did not have troops that could be sent there, so on March 16 it was decided that Hungarian units would be withdrawn from Transcarpathia, and Czech and Romanian troops would enter there. On March 20, a note demanding that the consent to the withdrawal of troops be communicated within 24 hours was handed over to Budapest. The Hungarian government resigned, and on March 21 the Social Democratic and Communist Parties of Hungary formed a coalition government which proclaimed a Soviet Republic. The Entente did not have troops that could be sent to Hungary, while Romania had an army of almost 200 thousand people, reduced to 18 infantry and 2 cavalry divisions, of which 4 infantry divisions were in Transylvania, and 3 infantry and 2 cavalry - in Bessarabia. Therefore, on March 22, England declared to Romania that it was ready to help with the supply of a 100,000-strong army. France supported this idea and promised Bucharest the help of the French Expeditionary Force and the troops of Czechoslovakia¹⁷². Under these conditions, the Romanian leadership saw its chance to achieve in Paris the realization of its territorial claims. Already on April 16, Romanian troops moved west and by May 3 reached the river. Tisza from the Carpathians to Szeged, occupied by the French units. The Hungarian government turned to Moscow for support.

As early as March 21, the commander-in-chief of the Soviet troops I.I. Vatsetis pointed out to the commander of the Ukrainian Front: "In recent weeks, your military units have been automatically moving along the line of least resistance in the south and southwest direction, for which you are spending the last reserves," and this is in conditions when a general battle began in the Donbass, from the outcome upon which our dominion in the south depends. Having received information about the proclamation of the Hungarian Soviet Republic, on March 23, Vatsetis suggested that the Soviet government, "if you approve," report to Budapest a plan of joint military operations: "1. Establish a common front between Hungary and the RSFSR through Bukovina. 2. Move the Hungarian Soviet troops from Bukovina to the rear of the Petliura troops advancing from Galicia to Kyiv"174. On March 26, the commander-in-chief demanded that Antonov-Ovseenko "suspend the development of actions in the direction of the Romanian border, as well as to the shores of the Black Sea, and transfer all excess troops from there against Petlyura's troops" for their final defeat. "Your advance in the western direction must be brought to the borders of southeastern Galicia and Bukovina. The latter is necessary in order to establish close direct contact with the Soviet troops in Hungary. On March 27, the commander of the Ukrainian Front informed the commander-in-chief that "I can't stop the offensive, since Odessa has almost been taken and special southern formations have been sent there"176 .

In March 1919, the troops of the advancing Ukrainian Front were reorganized: the Kiev, Odessa and Kharkov groups of troops were created within it177. On April 7, the Odessa Group of Forces (commander N.A. Khudyakov) included a separate brigade of Bogunsky, the Southern brigade of Bohun, the Peshekhonov brigade, the 1st consolidated regiment, the 15th Ukrainian Soviet regiment, two batteries of the 2nd separate brigade, 1— I am a brigade of the Zadneprovskaya division of Grigoriev, a special-purpose cavalry regiment of Besspalov and the Voznesensky regiment. The group's troops were tasked with "continuing the pursuit of the retreating enemy to Bessarabia and driving him out of the Dniester estuary"178. By order of Antonov-Ovseenko No. 47 of April 15, the Odessa Group of Forces was reorganized into the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army as part of the 1st brigade of the Zadneprovskaya division, the Bohunsky brigade, the Popov cavalry division, the Bessarabian rebel units and the 5th cavalry regiment, which should have been reduced to 5th and 6th Ukrainian Rifle Divisions179 .

On April 2, the operational summary of the troops of the Kharkov direction indicated that "Romanians were first noticed in the Odessa direction, who tried to advance with the support of their artillery and two tanks, but were repulsed"180. Meanwhile, the Franco-Greek troops were evacuated from Odessa, and on April 6, Grigoriev's units entered the city. On April 7, Antonov-Ovseenko ordered the troops advancing towards Odessa and the Crimea: "Your task is to defend and secure the coast, capture the Dniester line up to and including Rybnitsa. [...] Bring the rest of the division into a division, except for Grigoriev. Grigoriev to send at the disposal of Dybenko with three regiments for clearing the Crimea. The latter, if there are no obstacles to occupying the Dniester line"181. April 8 southwest of Odessa at st. Benefits were fighting with the Romanian troops, retreating to the estuary182. A report dated April 8 reported that "the French infantry units, having left Odessa, are retreating to Akkerman in marching order. Enemy ships, having left the port, stand in a distant roadstead. The guns are aimed at the city."183 On April 12, Soviet troops again occupied Zhytomyr, which was recaptured from them for a short time by the troops of the UNR, and on April 17 they entered Kamenetz-Podolsk184. On April 18, Soviet troops occupied Razdelnaya, Tiraspol, Ovidiopol, on April 20 - Dubossary, on April 23 - Lighthouses, ensuring an uninterrupted supply of Odessa with water.

In the meantime, a plan of operation against Romania was being developed at the headquarters of the Ukrainian Front. As early as April 6, an operational note was prepared, which stated that "due to political and social conditions, the Romanian kingdom is an opponent of the Soviet Ukrainian Republic. Hungary is at the moment our ally and is offering its military forces for the struggle against the capitalist states. We have been given the task: to invade the borders of Romania, relying on our right flank to Hungary and pushing the Romanians to the sea. To accomplish this task, Soviet troops must first of all reach the Dniester from Kamenetz-Podolsk to the Black Sea. "For the offensive of the invasion of Romania" four groups are being created. The first group should occupy Bukovina, the second - to advance from Mogilev-Podolsky to Ocnita and Balti, "from where, along the highway, immediately launch an attack on Iasi on a wide front." The third group from the Rybnitsa-Dubossary-Tiraspol region, having crossed the Dniester, "occupies the Iasi-Kishinev line and the main city of Russian Bessarabia - Chisinau." The fourth group from the Razdelnaya-Odessa region, having crossed the Dniester in Tiraspol, Ovidiopol, Akkerman and "supporting the Rybnitsa-Balti group by occupying Chisinau, is developing an offensive along the railway to Leipzigskaia and from the station. Novokaushany at st. Kagalnik for communication with a group advancing from Ackerman to Guru Chilingider and the river basin. Chilingider [Chelegider]. By the indicated period, all groups should be on the line Suceava-Foltici [Felticeni]-Iasi-Chisinau-Leipzigskaia-Bien, Gura Chilingider-Zhebryany [Zhebriany] on the Black Sea coast. At the end of this offensive, the Red Army will link up

with the troops of Soviet Hungary, who will advance through Kirlibaba and Campulung-Moldovenesk to Suceava-Botosani. Later it was assumed that "an offensive along the Iasi-Vaslui-Focsany-Rymnik-Ploiesti-Bucharest line, a demonstration along the Leipzigskaia-Galati-Brailov-Bucharest line with access to the Danube with a joint attack of the Hungarian Soviet troops along the Kronstadt [Brashov]-Ploiesti line - Bucharest and the demonstration of the fleet at Costengi [Constanza] will deal such a decisive blow to the Romanian kingdom that it will burst at all seams. Ukrainian and Hungarian Soviet troops take Bucharest, Bessarabian troops occupy Galati, Bolgrad, Reni and Izmail. As a result

"the entire territory of Bessarabia within its former state borders must be cleared of Romanian troops"¹⁸⁵. A draft operational

order was prepared for the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army, from which it was required: "Having made the crossing at Dubossary across the river. Dniester with a simultaneous demonstration at Bendery and Akkerman, hiding behind a flank movement to Iasi, keeping in touch with the advancing rebels in the northern part of Bessarabia and Moldavia, occupy Chisinau and, advancing deep into Bessarabia, gradually moving from Chisinau to the south, take the enemy resisting at Bender- Akkerman, and push him to the Black Sea and the Danube. Coming out to connect with our northern units advancing deep into Bessarabia, take Falchi [Falchiu], the crossing on the Prut and further occupy Focsani and southern Romania, where to get in touch with the Soviet troops of Bulgaria "¹⁸⁶.

According to a more detailed note, the troops of the 3rd Army were to carry out demonstrative actions on the Dniester near Criulian, Grigoriopol, Bendery, Chebruchi and Akkerman. It was necessary to cross the river at Bodului-Voda [Vadului-Voda], from where the troops would move towards Chisinau. Having occupied the city, "the main forces [...] must continue the attack on the crossing over the Prut near the town of Leovo" and "at the same time, sending an auxiliary column to Iasi ... take it.

II. Having occupied Leovo and [Tsy]ganka, cross the Prut and occupy Falchi [Falchiu].

III. The troops who demonstrated at Bendery and at Chebruchy, on the Dniester, cross the Dniester and, having taken all measures to preserve the bridge during the offensive, follow to st. Leipzig, keeping in touch with the main column along the way of their march, and connect with the column following from Ackermann to Leipzig. The column from Ovidiopol to follow to Kiliya and Izmail, guarding the Black Sea coast from any encroachments of the landing force.

IV. By this time, take Falchi [Falchiu], the right column - Iasi, and the left flank, through Leipzig, - Galati. Coastal column - Izmail-Kiliya-Vilkov.

V. Having occupied Falchi [Falchiu], advance the main column through Bursuly to Birlad and further to Tekuch-Fokshany-Buzya [Buzau]-Urzicheni, crossing the [r.] Ialomitsa, Bucharest, Zhurzhevo [Giurgiu] until the connection with the Bulgarian Soviet troops.

VI. The right column from Iasi to advance on Pashkany and, having united with the Bessarabian troops, be in the reserve of the main column"¹⁸⁷. On

April 21, Vatsetis, informing the Council of People's Commissars of the RSFSR about the entry of the Red Army into Galicia, asked the government "how admissible this advance is from a general political point of view, what task is set for this advance, and what final line the troops should take"¹⁸⁸. April 22 V.I. Lenin replied that "advance into part of Galicia and Bukovina is necessary for communication with Soviet Hungary. This problem needs to be solved faster and more firmly." Two main tasks were set before the troops of the Ukrainian Front: 1) "to help the Donbass" and 2) "to establish a strong connection by rail with Soviet Hungary"¹⁸⁹. Accordingly, the next day, Vatsetis set the task for the Ukrainian Front to link up with Hungary and speed up assistance to the troops of the Southern Front.

On April 22, the command of the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army reported that "the entire left bank of the Dniester from Beloch [in] 20 versts north. Rybnitsa to the mouth with crossings in our hands. The Petliura gangs have gone beyond the Dniester, some of them have been disarmed. Romanian units broke into Galicia. 3 Romanian monitors fired at Ovidiopol and the coast of the estuary to Bugaz, smashed and took away all the boats and barges in this area"¹⁹¹. On the evening of the same day, the operational report of the army reported: "There are no changes at the front. During the retreat of the enemy, we captured 24 guns, 14 rolling stock, 8 locomotives, 6 thousand shells, 100 thousand cartridges, 3 thousand rifles without locks, 6 cars and many other property near Bendery. On April 25, the command of the 3rd Army reported that "the Romanians are trying to enter into negotiations, wanting to distract us and concentrate their forces. Otherwise, no change." "On the night of April 30, the enemy, with a force of up to one battalion, crossed the Dniester and tried to occupy the villages of Solobodzeya and Olykhoy. A counterattack by Ploskovtsev and Popov's cavalry battalion was thrown into

Dniester Front

The exit of Soviet troops to the Dniester revived the hopes of the Bessarabian population for an early liberation from the Romanians. The French command was convinced that the local population was hostile to the Romanians. Romanian soldiers, under the influence of the explanatory work of the Romanian communists, became more receptive to Bolshevik propaganda. The soldiers of the 56th Romanian regiment rebelled and killed the officers, but this performance was suppressed¹⁹⁵. According to Soviet intelligence, "Romanian officers are of the opinion that if the Bolsheviks begin to attack, then they will have to clear all of Bessarabia, since without the help of the French they cannot hold out"¹⁹⁶. Favorable

conditions were created for the liberation of Bessarabia. On April 13, the commander of the Ukrainian Front ordered the 1st Ukrainian Soviet Army "on the extreme right flank to concentrate the Bessarabian units in order, by special order: a) to assist the group of Comrade Khudyakov in the campaign against Romania; b) a campaign through Bukovina and Ugorshchina to get in touch with Soviet Hungary"¹⁹⁷. On the same day, the commander of the 3rd Army received an order: "Get ready to vigorously attack Romania. From the north, the rebels, subordinated before contact with

you [commander of the 1st Army] Matsiletsky, they will tie up the enemy. You strike through Dubossary-Kishinev, from where the auxiliary detachment - Iasi, and the main force - to the south behind enemy lines and to connect with our advancing from Bender and Akkerman. By this it is possible to save bridges and disorganize the enemy. Then the Prut crossing in the middle reaches and access to the line of the river. Seret. You will receive a detailed order.”¹⁹⁸ On April 20, while in Odessa, Antonov-Ovseenko ordered the need to organize the Romanian Soviet units and establish contact with the Bulgarians and the Turkish revolutionary layers, who were determined to fight the Romanians. “Your movement into Bessarabia,” he pointed out to Khudyakov, “must be accompanied by the rise of Bulgaria against Rumania.” Appropriate assistance was to be provided through the

Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR¹⁹⁹. The troops of the 3rd Army began to prepare an offensive. On April 24, the commander of the 3rd Army issued Order No. 02, which stated that “the task of the Ukrainian Front is to clear Bessarabia and vigorously prepare for an attack on Romania with access to the river. Seret, so that with the assistance of the rebels of the northwest and Dobruja, who sympathizes with us, together with the Soviet troops of Hungary and Bulgaria, to establish the power of the proletariat in Romania. The task of the 3rd Army is to ensure crossings on the Dniester River, to cross to the western bank of the Dniester River with the capture of important nodes of resistance in Bessarabia, continuing to disorganize the enemy; liberate Bessarabia and establish Soviet power there; continue to protect the Black Sea coast.” The commander ordered the division commander – 5 t. Peshekhonov: “Having secured the crossings on the Dniester River from the village. Rybnitsa inclusive to the mouth of the river. Dniester, take and hold the line of Chisinau, art. Bessarabian (st. Leipzig), st. Artsis (village Brieska), mouth of the river. Kogilnik, for which, having captured the Chisinau road junction with the city of Chisinau, with an energetic blow to the south in the direction of st. Leipzig to capture the railway junction at the station. Artsis, in order to prevent the enemy from escaping from under Ackerman. [...] Take all preparatory measures for the fulfillment of the designated task, which to begin no later than May 1 of this year. Conduct reconnaissance before the front, sending forward special agitation

detachments with the aim of raising uprisings behind enemy lines. The 6th Rifle Division, commanded by Grigoriev, remained in the reserve of the 3rd Army²⁰⁰. On the same day, by his order No. 0157, Khudyakov demanded from the inspector of army engineers: “In view of the upcoming movement of our troops to Bessarabia and further to the borders of Romania, it is necessary [: a)] to arrange and secure crossings on the Dniester (building and repairing bridges, building tet-de-ponov, etc.); b) repair of old and construction of new roads both in depth and along the front for unhindered movement and rapid deployment of troops; c) the supply of troops with all the necessary means for the production of engineering work. On all these issues, I ask you to give a report as soon as possible on what has been done and what you intend to do ...”²⁰¹ At the same time, similar orders were issued to the heads of the artillery, food supply and sanitary unit²⁰². Accordingly, the headquarters of the 5th Infantry Division of the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army ordered the commander of the 1st armored train of the Odessa railway junction to be ready, together with a detachment of 400-500 people, for an offensive through Bugaz to Akkerman, having occupied which it was necessary to get

On April 25, employees of the headquarters of the 3rd Army were sent to Kyiv and Moscow to obtain maps of Romania, Bessarabia and the former Odessa military district²⁰⁴. In Odessa and along the left bank of the Dniester, the command of the Ukrainian Front deployed military units created from Bessarabians and international regiments, in which, along with soldiers of other nationalities, there were many Romanians. In the Dubossary region there was a Bessarabian reserve battalion and several partisan detachments (Ploskovsky, Slobodzeya, etc.), a Bessarabian reserve battalion was stationed in the Tiraspol region, and the 1st Bessarabian regiment was stationed in the Ovidiopol region. All these units were part of the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army. On May 2, on their basis, the formation of the 1st Bessarabian Rifle Division began²⁰⁵.

The intentions of the government of the Ukrainian SSR are clearly visible from a conversation over a direct wire between its chairman Rakovsky and an unnamed interlocutor on April 28, 1919: “As a political demonstration that would accompany our offensive against Bukovina and Bessarabia, we can send a note to Romania and its allied guarantors. The central point in this note could be the Russian-Romanian treaty of March 5 last year. It constitutes for us a convenient direct basis for military operations against the Romanians, the object of which we will make Bessarabia, and in fact the overthrow of the Romanian bourgeoisie and the unification of their corpses with Hungary. This political demonstration will lift the mood in Hungary. We are preparing an operation against the Romanians, using explicitly international and Bessarabian elements in such a way that it will not be to the detriment of the implementation of Vladimir Ilyich's directives. I personally believe that we will carry out our operations in Bukovina and Bessarabia under a local firm, without advertising ourselves. For Bessarabia, a Bessarabian government has already been prepared in Odessa, the composition of which we will discuss today and which consists of Bessarabian comrades. On

April 28-30, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of the Bessarabian Republic (Chairman I.N. Krivorukov) was created, which on May 8, 1919 published a manifesto stating that Bessarabia, being a Soviet Socialist Republic, is part of the RSFSR as its integral part. “All laws, orders, resolutions and orders, both of the Romanian government and its agents, and of the Board of Directors [of Sfatul Tarii] and its agents are considered illegal and cannot be enforced. All factories, factories, banks, large trading enterprises and quarries are declared the property of the Republic. “All the lands of the landlords with all living and dead inventory must be taken away and transferred to the organs of the Soviet

power ... for further gratuitous transfer to the peasants ... moreover, all large-ownership and kulak ownership of the land is destroyed. [...] All contractual obligations of workers and peasants towards landlords and capitalists are considered non-binding. All the national groups of Bessarabia now enjoy full autonomy..." The Provisional Government announced that after the expulsion of the occupiers it would convene a Congress of Soviets in Bessarabia, to which it would transfer power. It called on the working people to oppose the occupiers and join the ranks of the Soviet troops .

On May 1, 1919, the governments of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR delivered an ultimatum to the Romanian government, which reminded them that, according to the agreement of March 5–9, 1918, the Romanian side undertook to withdraw its troops from Bessarabia, but did not do so. Therefore, the Soviet governments are ready to "put an end to the violence and defiant actions of the Romanian Government. Not wishing to shed the fraternal blood of the Rumanian workers and peasants acting under compulsion, both Soviet Governments address the Rumanian Government with the following proposals:

1. Immediate evacuation of Romanian troops, officials and agents from all of Bessarabia and provision freedom for the Bessarabian workers and peasants to establish their own power;
2. Bringing to the people's court all the perpetrators of the crimes committed against the Bessarabian workers and peasants and over the entire population of Bessarabia;
3. Return of all military property belonging to Russia and Ukraine, seized by Romania; 4. Return to the inhabitants of Bessarabia of all property taken away and confiscated from them. The Russian and Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Governments expect within 48 hours, starting from the first of May at 10 p.m., a clear and precise answer on the acceptance of their proposal; otherwise, they will consider themselves to have complete freedom of action with respect to Romania .

On May 2, the government of the Ukrainian SSR sent a note to the government of Romania, in which it drew attention to the fact that "Bukovina, which had the prospect of liberation from any class and national oppression, became the prey of the greedy Romanian military and civilian oligarchy." The Ukrainian SSR protested and offered "Romania to declare within 48 hours its consent to immediately evacuate Bukovina with its troops. The specified period expires on May 4 at 2 o'clock. On May 4, at a meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the Ukrainian SSR, it was decided to come to the aid of Soviet Hungary²¹⁰ . The Revolutionary Military Council of the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army addressed the population of

Bessarabia with an appeal to fight against the Romanian invaders, which, in particular, said: "The banner of the social revolution has swept the whole world, from Hungary to France. The revolutionary workers and peasants of Ukraine, freed from the yoke of their oppressors and restored the power of the people - the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, decided to come to the aid of their exhausted sister - Bessarabia. We have launched an attack on Bessarabia - to help you. Tiraspol is in our hands. On the points of our bayonets we carry the banner of victory, the banner of the struggle for a better future, the struggle for land, for the rights of the working people. The old world is giving way to a strong, poor class of peasants and workers. The thrones of the executioners-kings have been shaken, and the hour is near when red flags will rise in black Chisinau, Iasi and Bucharest - the banners of freedom of the working people of the whole world .

The enemy forces in Bessarabia were estimated by the beginning of May at 10 thousand people (including 4-5 thousand infantry), a small detachment of cavalry and 45 guns²¹². The troops of the 3rd Army on May 1 totaled 29,887 people, 199 machine guns, 85 guns, 12 armored trains and 12 aircraft²¹³. Meanwhile, on May 1, fighting broke out on the Dniester. "The Romanians are advancing along the front from Nezavertailovka to Mayak. There are units with machine guns that have crossed the river. This position is occupied by the Transnistrian Soviet regiment, temporarily seconded [to] the 5th Tilegulsky regiment, consisting of 1,500 people. There are only 500 rifles, no cartridges. We ask you to immediately send 1,000 rifles and 100,000 Russian cartridges by truck to Mayaki. While we hold the enemy. Urgent need for ammunition. In the morning report of May 1, it was reported that "on the Transnistrian front, the Romanians tried to cross the Dniester, but were repulsed with heavy losses"²¹⁵. According to a report dated May 2, "Romanian reconnaissance detachments, who tried to cross the Dniester River at Nezavertailovka, were repulsed by rifle and machine-gun fire. On the rest of the front, no change"²¹⁶ .

On May 2, Khudyakov notified Antonov-Ovseenko that a lead train with the appropriate equipment was needed to restore the Bendery bridge. If a quick restoration of the bridge is not possible, "it is necessary to build a temporary bridge for the movement of light artillery and carts." On the same day, he ordered to start collecting floating equipment on the Black Sea coast for the construction of a floating bridge across the Dniester²¹⁷. Moreover, a survey of the Bendery bridge showed that its restoration would require powerful equipment and at least 3 weeks of time²¹⁸. The commander of the Ukrainian Front, who visited units of the 6th Infantry Division on April 22-23 and 29, pointed out to the commander: "You are making a big mistake not to let Grigoriev forward; do not leave him in the rear, give him the task of crossing Dubossary, Kishinev, Leipzig and part of Falchi [Falchiu]. The Fifth [Division] will join the Leipzig division. The right flank will be covered by Dmitriev's partisan detachment, which you will send first of all to intercept the routes from Iasi to Gush [Khushi and] Dokolin. The left flank is the fishermen of the Danube arms, who must be raised by special detachments, through which Bulgaria will be agitated"²¹⁹ . On May 3, the Belarusian brigade was ordered to be ready in 3 days to "set out as directed"²²⁰ .

On May 4, the Commander-in-Chief indicated to the command of the Ukrainian Front that "it is necessary to strengthen the forward line along the Dniester near Karkmaza-Bendera-Rybnitsa and Mogilev on the Dniester, making extensive use of your previous positions"²²¹. In that

On the same day, Antonov-Ovseenko informed Vatsetis that "due to the expiration of the ultimatum presented by the Ukrainian government to Romania, the UkrFront will face new combat missions, as a result of which" the creation of a reserve in the north is delayed. To this, the commander-in-chief replied that "the Ukrfront has not yet set any active tasks against Romania"²²². The command of the Red Army increasingly came to the conclusion that protracted fighting in the Donbass would decide the fate of operations in southern Russia, and the Ukrainian Front was required to transfer free units to the Donbass²²³. On May 5, Vatsetis again turned to Antonov-Ovseenko, demanding that he, in addition to the forces necessary for operations in Bukovina, send all other troops to the Donbass²²⁴.

Meanwhile, on May 3, Khudyakov reported to Antonov-Ovseenko that "all orders for the offensive of the troops have been given. The reorganization of the troops is completed. Changing the mission will confuse the given orders and may lead to the failure of the offensive. Grigoriev only does what he sends demands for an incredible amount of equipment and uniforms, without giving any information about the actual and combat composition of the division. Your instructions regarding the partisan detachment of Dmitriev and the fishermen of the Danube will be carried out. Grigoriev will be used as a reserve in the beginning operations. Letting Grigoriev in the first place will delay the execution of the operation"²²⁵. In response, on May 4, the commander of the Ukrainian Front replied that "it's better to slow down the operation for a day or two than to risk the rear. Grigoriev has 15,000 combatants ... Grigoriev will go forward in a completely different way. You need to personally push it. There are no guarantees in his trustworthiness, you cannot let him hesitate. It is necessary that he speak immediately." ²²⁶

According to a report dated May 3, "it is calm on the front of the 3rd Army. Reconnaissance and preparations are being made for the offensive, which will begin on the 6th [th] in the morning. Grigoriev in Alexandria, his 1st brigade in Elisavetgrad, 4th regiment at station. Auxiliary and the 5th regiment at the disposal of the division chief-5. [...] Our right flank is the town of Rybnitsa"²²⁷. On May 5, Antonov-Ovseenko informed Khudyakov that, according to intelligence, the Romanian army consisted of 5 army corps. Of these, 31/2 are advancing on Hungary, the 5th Corps (9th, 10th Infantry Divisions, 3rd, 5th Cavalry Brigades) in Bessarabia, the 3rd (5th, 6th, 12th Infantry divisions) - on the river. Seret. The Romanians are expecting a Soviet offensive at Dubossary. In Hungary, the

Romanians reached the river. Tisa, and the Czechs captured Komarno²²⁸. On May 5, the 1st Army received an order from the commander of the Ukrainian Front No. 964/lk, which stated that "May 6, Khudyakov begins operations against Romania in the direction of Chisinau. You need to immediately start strong demonstrations throughout your section of the Dniester, meaning an offensive through Khotyn-Novoselytsia-Dorohoy, to cut off Bukovina and capture the routes to Iasi and the passages of Dorna, Vatra and Kirlibaba [Kyrlibaba] through the Carpathians"²²⁹. On May 6, the commander of the Ukrainian Front notified Khudyakov: "Your order No. 02 of April 24 has only been received today. It is not good to give an exact combat order 10 days in advance. Your order does not provide for an auxiliary movement towards Iasi to cover the advance to the south. I repeat, Grigoriev's units must be moved forward and it must be borne in mind by the rapid movement of a special detachment to seize the crossings on the Prut - a further movement to Seret is ahead. The next day, Antonov-Ovseenko informed the commander-3 that "the situation in Hungary has deteriorated sharply. It is unacceptable to delay the offensive. Quickly move Dmitriev, then Grigoriev. Tomorrow I'm leaving for Odessa."

On May 7, People's Commissar of the Ukrainian SSR N.I. Podvoisky issued Order No. 396, according to which "by decision of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee, our armies go on the offensive against the Romanian White Guards – the executioners of our brothers in Bessarabia..."²³². On May 8, he reported to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic that two divisions, the International and Bessarabian, were being formed "with the special task of rendering assistance to Hungary, the liberation of Bessarabia"²³³. However, their formation was delayed²³⁴. On May 9, the chairman of the SNK of the Ukrainian SSR, Rakovsky, in a telegram to the commander of the Ukrainian Front, the 3rd Army and the 6th Infantry Division, reported that on May 3, Hungary offered Romania to make peace. Bucharest agreed on the condition that all Hungarian troops be disarmed, all weapons, uniforms, food and other property should be transferred to the Romanian army within 10 days. All railway materials east of the Tisza, 1,800 steam locomotives, 31,100 wagons, all ships on the Tisza are transferred to Romania, within three days the Hungarians must transfer 4 armored trains, 800 serviceable vehicles, a fortress on the right bank of the Tisza, which was supposed to become the western border of Romania. "The Hungarian workers' and peasants' government rejected these monstrous conditions and declared that it would fight to the last drop of blood." The government of the Ukrainian SSR promised Hungary its help. "By advancing on landlord Romania, we not only liberate the Ukrainians and our other brothers, the workers and peasants of Bessarabia and Bukovina, but also forestall the danger that threatens Soviet power in the Ukraine, against which the Rumanian White Guard generals, intoxicated by the victory over the Hungarian workers and peasants, will rush. Hurry up. Every lost minute will help the enemy to take the initiative into his own hands. There should be no room for hesitation." ²³⁵

On May 9, Antonov-Ovseenko, by his order No. 885, brought to the attention of Khudyakov and Grigoriev that the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR had presented an ultimatum to Romania demanding that Bukovina and Bessarabia be cleared. The government of Eastern Galicia was invited to enter into negotiations on the establishment of a demarcation line and border. "In this situation, a great responsibility will fall on you, on the troops of Nachdiv Grigoriev and other parts of the 3rd Army - you must strike a blow that will free the Ukrainian Soviet Republic from the formidable danger from the Romanian boyars, these agents of allied predation, now in a hurry to strangle Soviet Hungary, then to rush to the Soviet Ukraine. Explain this to your troops, inspire them to a feat. Let them understand that the work begun in Odessa must be brought to an end." ²³⁶

On May 9, the commander of the Belarusian brigade received an order from the morning of May 10 to go to Ovidiopol²³⁷. However, on May 7–9, having received an “operational order to march on the Bessarabian positions” near Balta, Grigoriev’s units, on the basis of which the 6th Rifle Division was formed, who were on vacation in the Alexandria region, mutinied, “during the movement, parts of it, impregnated banditry, began to rob, rape. Grigoriev himself declared himself hetman of Ukraine²³⁸. In this situation, the commanders of the 1st and 3rd armies on May 10–11 were ordered to “continue the preparation of the offensive in Romania [and Bukovina], but postpone the offensive itself”²³⁹. Accordingly, on May 10, Khudyakov ordered the commander of the 5th Infantry Division “to continue preparing an offensive against Romania, while the offensive itself was temporarily postponed.” The troops were tasked with defending themselves against the rebellious units of Grigoriev, who was outlawed²⁴⁰. Since May 12, Soviet troops have been drawn into battles with the rebels²⁴¹. The uprising swept the central regions of Ukraine, pulling over 14 thousand bayonets and 600 sabers²⁴².

On May 12, Rakovsky, chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, informed Vatsetis that “Grigoriev’s adventure thwarted the offensive we were preparing against Bessarabia, which we were preparing without harming the Donets Basin. We have placed Hungary in a difficult position and ourselves in an undesirable position. Nevertheless, the fighting on the Dniester continued. On May 12, according to the morning operational report of the 3rd Army, “our valiant red troops broke through the Romanian front. At the village of Chebruchi, 25 versts south of Tiraspol, they crossed to the right bank of the Dniester, pursuing the enemy for 10 versts, capturing weapons and horses. However, the reports for the following days do not contain information about the development of this offensive, since the Soviet troops returned to the left bank of the Dniester. Explaining what had happened to the commander-in-chief, Antonov-Ovseenko reported on May 17: “The newspapers exaggerated. There was a raid, a big maneuver was supposed, but it was thwarted by Grigoriev’s uprising. I do not refuse actions against Romania. International and Bessarabian

parts for this; there are not enough cartridges, we are still getting ready”²⁴⁵. According to the evening report of May 16, “Romanians fired 6 artillery shots at Dubossary, but after our battery fired at the premises of the Romanian headquarters [and knocked out 3 enemy guns], the fire was stopped”²⁴⁶. On May 17, the commander of the 1st brigade of the 6th rifle division, Nedoluzhenko, reported that at 22.00 on May 16, the Romanians fired 16 shells at Rybnitsa, there were casualties. “Against Dubossary, the activity of the enemy is noticeable. The Red Army soldiers are showing nervousness due to the lack of artillery. I ask for an urgent order for the immediate dispatch of artillery to Slobodka. The morning report of May 18 reported that “on the Bessarabian front, the Romanians shelled Rybnitsa with artillery fire. In the area of Dubossary, the enemy is digging trenches”²⁴⁸. According to the evening report of May 22, “on the Bessarabian front, our units crossed the Dniester and are 20 versts from Chisinau”²⁴⁹. On the same day, Antonov-Ovseenko pointed out to Khudyakov: “The news that you are taking Chisinau is not entirely clear. You have to be extremely careful. After all, we have practically no strength, no cartridges either, the supply is weak, Grigoriev is not finished. Better engage in intensive reconnaissance and do not get involved in serious battles. This, however, did not prevent the commander of the Ukrainian Front from reporting to Moscow on May 24: “We launched an offensive in the direction of Chisinau, our units are now 7 versts from Chisinau. This offensive is being carried out by units that were only stop

On May 23, I. Gorelov, chairman of the district military commissariat, reported from Yampol: “For the second day, the Romanians are bombarding Yampol, making absurd and impossible demands, to which we give a categorical refusal. Residents leave the city, as there is no way to stay in it. Not a single shot is fired from our side, resistance will be offered only if the Romanians begin to cross over to our shore. The city has a garrison of the 1st Bessarabian regiment in the amount of 259 bayonets, 8 machine guns and 1 gun. An acute shortage of Russian cartridges and machine-gun belts. We ask for further instructions.” On the whole, according to the report of May 23, “no change on the Bessarabian front”²⁵³. The evening report of May 25 reported that “on the Bessarabian front, enemy artillery fired on Dubossary”²⁵⁴. Considering the worsening position of the Red Army in the Donbass, on May 26, Vatsetis ordered “to go on the defensive in the western part of the Ukrainian front from the Dniester and Galicia”, to allocate troops to the Southern Front and suppress the Grigoriev rebellion²⁵⁵.

On May 25, the governments of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, with their note, recalled that Romania had seized and used at its own discretion the property of the Russian troops of the Romanian Front and located in Bessarabia. A significant part of the captured was sold or placed at the disposal of the whites. “Now that it has become clear to the Rumanian Government that the end of its shameful rule over the Bessarabian workers and peasants has come to an end, before its retreat it has set itself the goal of plundering all of Bessarabia.” The Soviet governments of Russia and Ukraine, “reserving the right to bring to justice the revolutionary tribunal” the perpetrators of the robberies, “disclaim any responsibility for the further fate of various valuables” brought from Romania to Russia during the First World War²⁵⁶. True, as Antonov-Ovseenko later admitted, “the situation developed in such a way that, despite our resolute intentions, we were forced to confine ourselves to pompous declarations and trifling military demonstrations in relation to the Romanians”²⁵⁷.

The evening report of May 27 reported that “on the Bessarabian front, partial battles in the Bendery region”²⁵⁸. According to the evening report of May 28, “on the Bessarabian front, the enemy troops staged a rally at which a resolution was passed not to resist the Soviet troops. Reconnaissance units in the amount of 127 Red Army soldiers crossed the Dniester at 3 o’clock in the morning and captured the Bender fortress with a quick and energetic strike, captured 600 Romanians and French. Later, under the onslaught of superior units

ours crossed back to the left bank of the Dniester, taking the prisoners with them"259. The appearance of Soviet soldiers in the city led to an uprising of the local population. The rebels seized the city center, railway station, depot and other enterprises. The French command ordered to suppress the uprising, but many French soldiers refused to obey the order and began to fraternize with the rebels. Nevertheless, the French command managed to bring up artillery and, with the help of Algerian riflemen and Polish legionnaires, shell the city and suppress the uprising. On May 29, the city was declared in a state of siege, executions and persecution of all those suspected of sympathy for the Reds began. On May 28, Antonov-Ovseenko, in accordance with the directive

of the commander-in-chief of May 26, ordered the troops "to maintain a defensive position on the outer front"261. However, the Soviet-Romanian clashes on the Dniester continued. The morning report of May 29 reported that "on the Bessarabian front, scouts are being searched and a gunfight is taking place in the Bendery region"262. According to the evening report of May 29, "on the Bessarabian front, during an airplane raid on Bendery, our pilot dropped several pounds of proclamations," and "in the Dubossary-Bendery region, there was a gunfight"263. According to the morning report of May 30, "on the Bessarabian front there was an exchange of fire in the region of Bender" and "in the region of Dubossary there was a partial exchange of fire"264. The evening report of May 31 reported that "on the Bessarabian front in the Dubossary region, partial rifle and machine-gun fire, enemy attempts to cross the Dniester River are successfully beaten off by our artillery. Enemy aircraft carry out enhanced reconnaissance along the entire front. In the Bendery region, our units went on the offensive in the area of Starye Lipkany, Parkany, Tarnovka, which is [in] 8 versts northwest of Tiraspol"265.

The morning report of June 1 reported that "on the Bessarabian front in the area of Starye Lipkany, Parkany, rifle and machine-gun firefight"266. On June 4, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic, Trotsky, issued Order No. 104 on the disbanding of the Ukrainian Front and the formation of the 12th Army from the troops of the 1st and 3rd Ukrainian Soviet armies, and the 14th Army from the 2nd Ukrainian Soviet Army267. On June 13, Antonov-Ovseenko also gave the corresponding order, and the new commander of the 12th Army, N.G. Semenov ordered that all troops of the former 3rd Army be reorganized into the 45th and 46th Rifle Divisions268.

The operational reports of the Soviet troops on the Dniester indicate that the battles with the Romanian troops continued. On June 5, "artillery skirmish on the Bessarabian front in the Bendery region"269. On June 7, "the enemy shelled the station and the city of Tiraspol with artillery fire"270. On June 9, 25 versts northwest of Tiraspol, in the Krasnogorka area, the enemy in 5 boats tried to cross to the left bank of the Dniester and push back our outpost, but was repulsed, the situation was restored271. As the commander of the 3rd brigade of the 5th rifle division Chernikov reported on June 10, "the Romanians have crossed the Dniester and are attacking Krasnaya Gorka [Krasnogorka] in the area where the 5th Tilegulsky regiment is located. The absence of Russian cartridges and machine guns makes it possible for the enemy to develop an offensive, but I have taken the most urgent measures to eliminate this offensive. In view of the complete disorganization of the Tiraspol garrison and some units stationed at the fronts in this area, and the absence of people in these units who would be in their places when necessary, because the real ones are not in their places. There are sporadic escapes of Red Army soldiers from positions, and the above-mentioned units are not part of our brigade ... "272 The evening report of June 10 reported that "in the area of

Krasnaya Gorka [Krasnogorka] the enemy launched an offensive. He crossed to the left bank of the Dniester, where he entered into battle with our outpost, which does not make it possible to move forward. Measures have been taken to eliminate the attack. In the Kuchurgany-Bendery region, the enemy is preparing to repair the railway bridge. There is a rare gunfight between Krasnaya Gorka [Krasnogorka] and Kuchurgany"273. Clashes with the Romanians in the area of Krasnogorka continued until June 14, when there was a lull. On the same day, a Romanian plane dropped 7 bombs on Tiraspol274. On June 15–16, an artillery and gun exchange took place near Tiraspol275. On June 19, a clash of scouts and artillery fire took place near Mayakov.

On June 1, 1919, the enemy troops in Bessarabia were estimated at 40.5–42 thousand bayonets and 2.4–2.8 thousand sabers, 88–100 guns, 18 armored cars277. The withdrawal of French and Greek troops from the region led to a reduction in enemy forces. According to Soviet intelligence, as of June 20, enemy forces in Bessarabia were estimated at 26,800 infantry and 1,700 cavalry278. As of June 15, the 3rd Ukrainian Soviet Army had 27,791 men, 285 machine guns, and 48 guns279. On June 22, "Romanians fired artillery at the villages of Slobodzeya and Karagach, 15 versts south of Tiraspol." On June 23, the Romanians bombarded Tiraspol with artillery fire. On June 24, Romanian artillery fired on Giderim and Vykhatintsy, and a group of scouts with machine guns tried to cross the Dniester near the village of Zhura, but was repulsed by Soviet troops280.

In his report to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic on the situation on the fronts, Vatsetis on June 24 indicated that "the most important task of the former Ukrainian Front at the present time is: a) defense on the borders of Romania; b) covering the direction to Kyiv [...]; c) restoration of ties with Soviet Hungary"281. However, the development of the situation on the Southern Front, where on May 17–19 the troops of A.I. Denikin went on the offensive in the Donbass and, having broken through the front, began to move deep into Ukraine, making these tasks of the 12th Army irrelevant. By the beginning of July, Denikin's troops reached the Dnieper. In July, UNR troops and Galician units launched an offensive from Galicia. Soviet troops on the Dniester were under threat of encirclement and retreated to Zhitomir at the end of August.

Bessarabian question at the peace conference

Meanwhile, on January 18, 1919, a peace conference opened in Paris. In his speech at the conference on February 1, Romanian Prime Minister I. Brătianu listed the territories that should have been annexed to his country - Transylvania, Bukovina, Bessarabia and Dobruja. True, the Entente countries, referring to the Bucharest Peace Treaty of 1918 and Romania's withdrawal from the war, refused to recognize the agreement of 1916, but the Romanian leadership quickly realized that anti-Soviet statements, and most importantly, deeds, could change the situation. Therefore, Brătianu asked the Entente to give Romania the opportunity to "resist Bolshevism not only in its own interests, but in the interests of all of Europe and even, without exaggeration, in the interests of world civilization." Of course, it was more convenient to defend world civilization not on the Prut, but on the Dniester²⁸².

For its part, on February 7, 1919, the government of the Ukrainian SSR sent a radiogram addressed to the chairman of the peace conference, J. Clemenceau, in which it declared "an energetic protest against the predatory imperialist policy of the Romanian landowner government" and recalled the agreement concluded on March 5–9, 1918 in Odessa through the mediation of representatives of the Entente. This treaty "remains a solemn international act, binding not only the Romanian government, but also the powers of the Accord, especially since during the occupation of Bessarabia by the Romanian troops, the diplomatic representatives of the powers of the Accord declared that it was purely temporary and military in nature." In addition, the conference was reminded that "the congress of the peasants of the Bessarabian Republic, which met in Chisinau from January 18 to January 22, 1918, ... unanimously spoke out against the Romanian occupation. [...] The Bessarabian workers and peasants, who have experienced the advantages of their own power, will never reconcile themselves to the rule of the Romanian landlords and capitalists..." will not allow the establishment of a power hated by the Romanian people themselves in the suffering and devastated Bukovina²⁸³. It is clear that no one in Paris was interested in such an opinion, as well as quite accessible information about the massacres of the Romanian invaders with the local population in Bessarabia.

To study all questions related to the territorial claims of Romania, the Council of Ten formed a commission of experts, chaired by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Tardieu, composed of representatives of the USA, England, France and Italy. On February 8, the Commission on Romanian Affairs came to the conclusion that without the participation of Russia, the issue of Bessarabia could not be resolved, and since there was a possibility of victory for the troops of Admiral A.V. Kolchak, the solution of the Bessarabian issue should have been postponed. On February 22, at a meeting of the Commission, Brătianu stated that "we cannot imagine the existence of the Romanian people without the Dniester, just as we cannot imagine it without the Danube and Tisza, in order to separate it from the Slavic element ... Bessarabia is the entrance to our house; if it is in the wrong hands, it may endanger our hearth."²⁸⁴ However, a certain part of the wealthy circles of Bessarabia considered it possible, in the event of a White victory in Russia, to return the region to its composition. As early as December 1918, a number of delegates were sent to Europe to propagate this idea. On March 9 and 22, 1919, the leaders of the Russian White movement addressed the Paris Conference with a statement stating that the status of the peoples of Russia "cannot be determined outside and without the consent of the Russian people", and the right of force cannot be a basis for seizing the territory²⁸⁵.

Under these conditions, the Commission on Romanian Affairs on March 22 recommended that Romania settle the issue of its borders with each neighboring state. On April 23, Brătianu, instructing Foreign Minister M. Ferehide, who replaced him at the conference, reminded him that "the fight against the Bolsheviks on our two fronts is a great danger at the present time. Our future frontiers also depend on the results of this struggle. On April 28, Ferehide sent a memorandum to the Allies with a proposal to authorize the occupation of Budapest by the Romanian troops, which "will make it impossible for the Hungarian and Russian Bolsheviks to cooperate," as well as them with the Maximalists in Germany. "It is impossible," the Romanian minister substantiated his position, "for Europe not to be aware of the burden lying on Romania to serve as a necessary barrier to aggressive Bolshevism."²⁸⁷ Among the conditions set on May 26 for Kolchak to be recognized as the "ruler of Russia" was the demand that the Paris Conference recognize the right to "determine the future fate of the Romanian part of Bessarabia"²⁸⁸. In this case, it was about the northern part of Bessarabia, while its southern regions were to become part of Kolchak's Russia. In his reply to the allies, Kolchak indicated that he was ready to discuss this problem, but the final decision rested with the Constituent Assembly. On July 2, 1919, during the discussion of the Bessarabian question at

the conference, a wish was expressed to hold a plebiscite in Bessarabia. Naturally, the Romanian representatives spoke out categorically against holding a plebiscite, referring to the fact that the majority of the population had already clearly expressed itself in favor of unification with Romania. As Brătianu stated, "in principle, I am against any plebiscite in Bessarabia, since Bessarabia, firstly, is Romanian both from a historical and ethnic point of view, and secondly, it, in conditions of complete freedom, expressed a desire to unite with Romania, in "Third, a plebiscite would help to maintain an atmosphere of uncertainty and unrest." Knowing that the Entente needed Romanian troops to suppress the revolution in Hungary, the Romanian Prime Minister decided to take an active position. "Russia occupied Bessarabia in order to reach Constantinople. The moment Constantinople ceases

be the goal of her foreign policy, then all her interest in Bessarabia will also disappear. I would agree to a plebiscite in Bessarabia, provided that the major powers also hold plebiscites in their territories. As a result, it was decided to postpone the solution of the Bessarabian issue in view of the international position of Russia²⁹¹.

On the same day, Brătianu sent a memorandum to the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Paris Peace Conference, which met under the chairmanship of the French Foreign Minister Tardieu, stating that "Romania, at a time when hostilities ceased more than 7 months ago for the rest part of Europe, is in a state of declared war with its Russian and Hungarian Bolshevik neighbors. In addition, on May 24, the 8th Romanian Infantry Division entered Eastern Galicia and occupied the Pokuttia region. Formally, the Romanian troops were a neutral force in the Polish-Ukrainian war and were used to disengage the troops of the parties. True, Romanian neutrality had a noticeable pro-Polish bias. After Poland occupied all of Eastern Galicia by July 17, and the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris adopted on August 1 a preliminary decision on the northern border of Bukovina, which transferred its entire territory to Romania, Romanian troops were withdrawn from Eastern Galicia on August 18. The final Polish-Romanian border received international recognition on March 15, 1923, when the Conference of Ambassadors recognized Poland's sovereignty over Eastern Galicia²⁹³.

Meanwhile, on August 3–4, 1919, Romanian troops occupied Budapest. In this situation, the Romanian government demanded that Hungary disarm all armed forces, establish Romanian control over the Hungarian railways, transfer to Romania 50% of railway equipment, 600 vehicles, 50% of the river fleet, 30% of livestock, 30 thousand wagons of grain, draw a border along the river Tisza and transfer the entire territory of the Banat to Romania. But the Entente was not going to allow unauthorized actions of Bucharest. Therefore, the Romanian government was threatened with financial sanctions and demanded that it act only with the consent of the West. On November 15, the Entente countries sent an ultimatum to Bucharest, in which they demanded that Romania sign the Treaty of Saint-Germain and the act guaranteeing the rights of national minorities "without discussion, reservations or conditions." As a result, on November 16, 1919, the Romanian troops left Budapest, and by November 22 they were withdrawn to the east bank of the river Tisa²⁹⁴.

In September 1919, Romania sent a Bessarabian delegation to Paris, which in every way promoted the progressive nature of the accession of Bessarabia to Romania and supported Bucharest's point of view regarding the uselessness of a plebiscite²⁹⁵. On December 10, Romania signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain, which secured Bukovina for it, but the Romanian troops still remained in Hungary. On December 29, 1919, the Romanian parliament adopted a law on the annexation of Transylvania, Bukovina and Bessarabia²⁹⁶. England and France hoped to push Romania to take joint action with Poland against their eastern neighbors, and on January 20, 1920, the Supreme Council of the Entente declared its readiness to recognize Bessarabia as part of Romania. In response, Bucharest declared its readiness to defend Europe from "new dangers"²⁹⁷. As the successes of the Red Army grew, the opinion of the conference leaned more and more in favor of the direct transfer of Bessarabia to Romania.

Moscow's Peace Proposals and the Paris Protocol on Bessarabia At that time,

Soviet troops again began to reach the Dniester line. On January 19, 1920, the Red Army entered Mogilev-Podolsky. The commander of the grouping of Denikin's troops retreating to Odessa, General N.N. On January 23, Schilling turned to Romania with a request for assistance in the evacuation of refugees and troops to Bessarabia, but received no answer²⁹⁸. As early as January 27, the High Command of the Red Army wrote in its report to the Workers' and Peasants' Defense Council: "The position occupied by Romania, subject to the influence of the Entente on it, which really affects the adoption of measures to prepare a shelter for the remnants of the Volunteer Army and refugees from the Right-Bank Ukraine, is not at all clear and can significantly complicate our offensive to the Black Sea and the borders of Bessarabia. On February 7–8, 1920, Soviet troops occupied Odessa³⁰⁰.

On February 9, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army S.S. Kamenev gave the order to the commander of the Southwestern Front A.I. Yegorov: "In the form of a nationwide policy, I order: The offensive of the troops [...] should continue only to the river. The Dniester, by no means crossing it either by advanced or reconnaissance units, even if the retreating units of the Volunteer Army and the Galicians, pursued by our troops, having crossed the Dniester, retreated to Bessarabia. Accordingly, on February 11, Yegorov set the troops of the 14th Army the task of "going to the line of the river. Dniester, from Mogilev-Podolsky to the mouth of the Dniester estuary, and occupy the right-flank parts of the N[ovaya] Ushitsa-Kamenets-Podolsk-Studenitsa area. After occupying the indicated line, the units of the army go on the defensive without crossing the river. Dniester neither advanced nor reconnaissance units"³⁰². On February 12, he confirmed this task: "the elimination of the remaining enemy units along the left bank of the Dniester, the occupation of the Dniester line from Mogilev-Podolsky to the mouth of the Dniester and then the transition to the defense along this line, by no means allowing even reconnaissance parties to cross the Dniester for

political reasons" ³⁰³. From near Odessa, Soviet troops moved in three columns to the Dniester - to Ovidiopol, to Tiraspol and to Dubossary. On February 13, 1920, units of the Red Army under the command of Kotovsky occupied Tiraspol and Parkany and reached the banks of the Dniester in this area. On the same day at Akkerman, the remnants of the Volunteer Army units were defeated and captured, which, hoping to leave for Bessarabia, retreated from Odessa to the Dniester, but were not allowed to cross the river by the Romanians. On February 18, the entire left bank of the Dniester from Rybnitsa to the Black Sea was occupied by Soviet troops. The Bessarabians of the Red Army persistently deman

motherland. Units of the 60th and 41st Rifle Divisions of the 14th Army were deployed along the Dniester, which on February 26 were ordered to "go over to the defensive, strengthening possible crossing points"³⁰⁴. On February 15, the Romanian troops in Bessarabia were estimated by Soviet intelligence at 5 infantry and 1 cavalry divisions (about 25 thousand bayonets and 1.5 thousand cavalry)³⁰⁵. By April 1, 1920, there were 37,922 people in the 14th Army of the Southwestern Front³⁰⁶. The success of the Soviet troops on the outskirts of Odessa and the Crimea required a significant effort, and the military situation on the Southwestern Front did

not favor the advance of the Red Army into Bessarabia. In February 1920, Soviet-Romanian soundings took place in Denmark with a view to a possible start of peace negotiations. February 9 M.M. Litvinov in a conversation with the Romanian representative D.N. Ciotori stated that "the Soviet governments of Russia and Ukraine are fully prepared to discuss both the territorial and financial claims of the Romanian government with the aim of achieving peace between the three interested parties as soon as possible"³⁰⁷. Privately, Litvinov agreed that the Bessarabians had the right to self-determination, and that the Romanian valuables in Russia should be returned³⁰⁸. On February 16, Chiotori was informed that

Moscow was "ready to immediately start negotiations" on these issues³⁰⁹. For its part, the Romanian government notified Ciotori on 20 February that "the proposal for peace must come from the Bolsheviks, since we do not consider ourselves at war with them. Peace must be a mutual recognition of the actual situation in accordance with the norms of international law and politics. Negotiations to establish economic relations will immediately follow the restoration of political peace on the basis of reciprocity and with the guarantee that they will avoid interfering in our internal affairs. The message of the General Staff in this regard indicates that nine divisions are approaching the Dniester. Is it with hostile intentions? Could you make the Bolsheviks offer peace like they offered it to other neighbors?"³¹⁰ On February 25, the Romanian Prime Minister A. Vaida-Voevod again pointed out to Ciotori: "Demand a public offer and save the values. Try to organize the repatriation of prisoners. The main thing is to achieve a public offer of peace as soon as possible."

February 24, 1920 People's Commissar of the RSFSR G.V. Chicherin sent a radiogram to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the following content: "The successful military operations of the armies of both Soviet republics, Russian and Ukrainian, created an urgent need for Russia and Romania to enter into negotiations in order to regulate relations between the two peoples by mutual agreement and establish peaceful relations between them, useful and beneficial for both parties. The Russian Soviet Government believes that all disputes between the two countries can be settled through peaceful negotiations and that all territorial issues can be settled amicably. Therefore, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs addresses the Romanian Government with a formal proposal to start peace negotiations and asks to indicate to it the place and time for the meeting of representatives of both states."

For its part, the government of the Ukrainian SSR also sent a radiogram to the Romanian government on February 26, stating that it was addressing the Romanian government "with the same formal peace proposal. [...] The Soviet government, a constant supporter of the peaceful resolution of all conflicts between peoples, constantly takes advantage of every opportunity to resolve all misunderstandings with Rumania by peaceful means. Proof of this are the favorable results of the negotiations between the Soviet Ukrainian authorities and the Romanian Government, interrupted by the German and Austrian invasion in February 1918. Thus, the Ukrainian Soviet government recalled the agreement between the Land of Soviets and Romania, concluded at the beginning of March 1918, in which Romania undertook to withdraw its troops from Bessarabia."

The Romanian leadership was in no hurry to respond to these appeals, since it was more important for him to clarify the position of England and France regarding Romanian territorial claims. The Entente countries did not have a common opinion regarding possible Soviet-Romanian negotiations. France was against these negotiations, Italy - for, and England believed that there would be no harm from them. In any case, England and France were interested in maintaining their influence in Romania and their control over the mouths of the Danube. Therefore, on March 3, 1920, the prime ministers of England, France and Italy decided: "Taking into account the general wishes of the population of Bessarabia, the Moldavian character of the region from a geographical and ethnographic point of view, as well as arguments of a historical and economic nature, the main allied powers spoke in favor of joining Bessarabia to Romania"³¹⁴. However, an official document on this issue will be signed after the Romanian troops are withdrawn from Hungary³¹⁵.

Having become acquainted with this decision of the Entente, the Romanian Prime Minister sent a telegram to Moscow on the same day, in which he reported that "Romania has completed its national unification" and "desires in peace and in friendly relations with its neighbors to establish the basis of its future economic and political development". Since Romania "adheres to the principle of refraining from interfering in the internal affairs" of Russia and Ukraine, it accepts a "formal proposal to start peace negotiations" and will later announce the place of a possible meeting of representatives of the parties³¹⁶. On March 5, Vaida-Voevod instructed Chiotori to get peace proposals from the Soviet representatives, which would contain "the recognition that Bessarabia belongs to us ... The valuables must be returned in full. The issue of prisoners will be settled. We recognize any government that is recognized by the Russian people."

On March 7, Ciotori reported to Bucharest the results of his conversations with Litvinov, who had renounced the unilateral declaration of belonging to Bessarabia, since it was precisely this issue that should become the basis of negotiations, as well as the question of Romanian values. Chiyotori himself believed that "they want to enter into negotiations, as this will strengthen their political position"³¹⁸. On March 8, Chicherin sent a note to Bucharest, in which he proposed the place of possible negotiations in which the Ukrainian SSR would take part, Kharkiv³¹⁹. In response, the Romanian government offered Warsaw as the venue for the talks³²⁰. On March 17, Chicherin pointed out that the RSFSR could not negotiate in Warsaw due to hostilities ongoing with Poland, and again offered Kharkov as a place for negotiations. However, the resignation of the government of Vaida-Voevod on March 13 led to the termination of discussions on the possibility of holding Soviet-Romanian negotiations³²². In April 1920,

the Romanian army was finally withdrawn from Hungarian territory. On June 4, 1920, the Treaty of Trianon was signed, which determined the western borders of Romania, which received Transylvania, Maramures, Crisana and eastern Banat. As a result, taking into account Bessarabia, the territory of Romania increased from 137,903 sq. km to 294,967 sq. km, and the population - from 8 to 16 million people, of which more than 25% were non-Romanian.

During the fierce battles on the Soviet-Polish front in the summer of 1920, the Entente tried to push Romania to intervene in the war on the side of Poland, but the widespread anti-war and revolutionary sentiments in Romanian society and the fear of being defeated and losing Bessarabia led to Romania taking a wait-and-see approach. Meanwhile, the Soviet leadership, concerned about the possibility of Romanian intervention in the Soviet-Polish war, continued to try to draw Bucharest into negotiations. On June 16, Moscow proposed to Romania negotiations on the passage of former prisoners of the Austro-Hungarian army across the Dniester³²³. According to Trotsky's note to the members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) dated June 19, he considered the moment apt "for a solemn proposal to Rumania for peace negotiations"³²⁴. This proposal was supported by I.V. Stalin, but on June 29 the Politburo decided to "postpone the offer of peace to Romania." True, discussions on this issue in the Soviet leadership did not subside.

Representatives of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR continued unofficial soundings of the position of Romania. On July 1, Ciotori informed the new Romanian Prime Minister Averescu about a preliminary conversation with the Soviet delegation in London, during which it became clear that the Soviet side was afraid of Romanian intervention in the Soviet-Polish war. Ciotori said that Romania was not going to violate its position of complete neutrality, and asked that Moscow also adhere to this principle in relation to Bucharest. Soviet delegates L.B. Krasin and N.K. Kolyshko was offered to conclude, if not a peace treaty, then at least "some kind of agreement." Naturally, the Romanian representative again pointed out the need to return the Romanian valuables in the RSFSR³²⁶. On July 7, Litvinov again reminded the Romanian diplomats in Denmark that "the Soviet governments of Russia and Ukraine are fully prepared to discuss both the territorial and financial claims of the Romanian government with a view to concluding peace as soon as possible", as well as to continue negotiations "on the exchange of prisoners of war and civilians" ³²⁷.

In the end, the Soviet leadership revised its position, and on August 5, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the RCP (b) decided to resume efforts to reach an agreement with Romania. On the same day, an official note was sent to Bucharest. Referring to newspaper reports that the Romanian government did not receive a response from Moscow in mid-March 1920, the Soviet side recalled that on March 17 a telegram was sent to the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a refusal to negotiate in Warsaw and a proposal to hold them in Kharkov. Be that as it may, "the Russian Government is ready to resume the exchange of opinions with the Romanian Government ... and, just as before, is imbued with the desire to hold a peace conference" at which "all questions of a territorial and economic nature" could be discussed. Kharkiv was once again proposed as a place for negotiations, but at the same time, Moscow was ready to discuss another place for negotiations³²⁸. On August 9, the Romanian government, referring to the fact that England invited him to participate in possible peace negotiations between Russia and neighboring countries in London, announced that it was waiting for further proposals from England³²⁹.

For its part, on August 29, Moscow, referring to the example of negotiations with Finland and Poland, again offered Bucharest direct bilateral negotiations³³⁰. At that time, the Soviet government was concerned that, in the face of the defeats of the Red Army on the Polish front, the danger of Romania's entry into the war increased again. Therefore, on September 4, Chicherin suggested that Litvinov, who was in Copenhagen, meet "with representatives of the Romanian government" and inform "them that we are not beaten at all and are strong enough to beat the Romanians if they oppose us." However, since the RSFSR wants to avoid war, "it is more advantageous for Rumania itself to negotiate with us about Bessarabia right now and talk with us about the gold fund"³³¹. Subsequently, Romania continued to insist that Moscow return her valuables, and the RSFSR insisted on the need to start negotiations³³².

On September 8, Romania announced its desire to restore centuries-old good-neighbourly relations with Russia and promised to report soon on how to achieve this³³³. However, for a month there were no new messages from Bucharest. Then, on September 29, Moscow again offered Bucharest to start negotiations "on territorial and financial issues of interest to both sides"³³⁴. It was not until October 8 that Averescu informed Chicherin that Romania had never taken any hostile action against

The RSFSR and "a real state of war with Russia never existed, either in fact or legally", since the Soviet ultimatums of May 1–2, 1919 "were not followed by either a formal declaration of war or an attack by organized military forces." Romania is ready to start negotiations with the RSFSR, but would like first of all to know on what basis these negotiations will be conducted. In its answer of October 13, Moscow also showed miracles of diplomatic resourcefulness and, expressing its readiness for negotiations to resolve all disputed issues, asked Bucharest whether it was ready for negotiations and whether Kharkov could become the place for these negotiations³³⁶.

On October 21, Romania reiterated its willingness to negotiate, but indicated that there were no contentious issues on its part. Therefore, Moscow was required to specify exactly which issues the Soviet government considers controversial³³⁷. In response, on October 27, Moscow, expressing satisfaction with Romania's readiness to enter into negotiations, pointed to the fact that military forces were passing through Romanian "territory, going to join forces with the Crimean counter-revolutionary rebels." Thus, the existence of controversial issues was again stated without their specific indication³³⁸. Information about the passage of troops through Romania for the army of P.N. Wrangel relied on the publications of the *Russkaya Gazeta* published in the Crimea, which reported on August 15 that a 5,000-strong detachment under the command of General N.E. had arrived in Feodosia on the Kherson steamer. Bredov. Back in early February, this detachment retreated from Odessa along the Dniester to the north and went to the location of the Polish troops, where it was interned. According to Bredov, the treatment of the internees was not very good, but when the Red Army went on the offensive, the Poles became kinder. On July 9, trains began to be sent through the territory of Romania to Reni and Galati, from where they were transferred by steamers to the Crimea³³⁹.

Meanwhile, on April 14, 1920, a draft treaty on Bessarabia was prepared in Paris. However, the United States refused to sign it and, despite the persuasion of the European allies, on August 10 declared "full respect for the Russian borders"³⁴⁰. Behind these diplomatic disputes was the rivalry between England and France with the United States for control of Romanian oil. As a result of the redistribution of German capital in Rumania, the distribution of foreign capital in her oil industry has changed radically. If in 1914 the most significant investments belonged to Germany (27.3%), the Netherlands (24.3%) and England (23.6%), then in 1920 England came first (30.6%), The Netherlands (24.3%) and France (12.1%), while the share of American investments remained at the same level³⁴¹. Naturally, the United States sought to prevent "Romania from giving oil concessions to other countries through agreements contrary to their interests," but this was not achieved. Therefore, Washington decided to refrain from signing a document recognizing Bessarabia as part of Romania. On September 9, 1920, speaking at a meeting of the Council of Ten, the Italian delegate Titoni noted that if Romania does not receive treaty

rights to Bessarabia, then it is quite obvious that Russia, when it recovers, will certainly strive to return Bessarabia to itself and that at that moment Romania will feel the need for the help of Western allies. Thus, the Bessarabian issue was a convenient opportunity to strengthen the influence of the Entente countries in Romania³⁴². In October 1920, Romania proposed a plan to create an association of Eastern European countries - the Little Entente, which could include Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (since 1929 - Yugoslavia). This idea was approved by England and France, which at that time were actively creating a "cordon sanitaire" in Eastern Europe.

As a result, on October 28, 1920, the main allied powers signed the Paris Protocol, according to which: "England, France, Italy, Japan and Romania, believing that in the interests of general peace in Europe it is important now to ensure sovereignty over Bessarabia that meets the wishes of the population and guarantees ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities due protection;

believing that in terms of geographical, ethnographic, historical and economic accession Bessarabia to Romania is fully justified;

believing that the population of Bessarabia expressed a desire to see Bessarabia annexed to Romania;

Considering, finally, that Romania has voluntarily expressed its desire to give firm guarantees of freedom and justice, without distinction of race, religion or language, in accordance with the treaty signed in Paris on December 9, 1919, to the inhabitants of the Romanian Kingdom within its former borders, as well as to the inhabitants of the newly annexed territories, decided to enter into this agreement.

1. The High Contracting Parties declare that they recognize the sovereignty of Romania over the Bessarabian territory lying between the present border of Romania, the Black Sea, the course of the Dniester from its mouth to the place where it is cut by the former border between Bukovina and Bessarabia and this former border.

2. A commission composed of three members, one of which will be appointed by the Principal Allied Powers, one by Romania and one by the Council of the League of Nations, instead of Russia, will be formed within 15 days after the entry into force of this treaty to determine on the site a new frontier line of Romania".

Romania will assign its citizenship to all residents of Bessarabia, former subjects of the Russian Empire. Former Russian subjects living in Bessarabia were granted the right of option in favor of Russia within 2 years after the entry into force of the treaty.

"7. The High Contracting Parties recognize that the mouth of the Danube, called the Kiliya branch, must come under the jurisdiction of the European Danube Commission. [...]

8. Romania will take responsibility for the proportional part of the Russian falling on Bessarabia

the public debt and all other financial obligations of the Russian State, as determined by a special convention between the Principal Allied Powers and Rumania... 9. The High Contracting Parties shall invite

Russia to accede to the present treaty as soon as a Russian government recognized by them exists. They reserve the right to submit to arbitration by the Council of the League of Nations all questions that might be raised by the Russian government in respect of the details of this treaty, it being agreed that the boundaries defined in this treaty, as well as the sovereignty of Rumania over the territories included in them, cannot be brought up for discussion. The same will apply to all questions that might subsequently arise in its application. The present treaty shall be ratified by the signatory

powers. It will take effect only after the

these ratifications for safekeeping" in Paris .

Having learned about the signing of an agreement in Paris recognizing Bessarabia as part of the territory of Romania, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR declared on November 1, 1920 that "they cannot recognize as having any force an agreement regarding Bessarabia that took place without their participation, and that they in no way do not consider themselves bound by the treaty concluded on this subject by other governments .

On November 10, Romania rejected accusations of passing armed forces hostile to the Soviet government through its territory. Regarding the protest against the annexation of Bessarabia, it was stated that "this province, as Romanian as the rest of the kingdom, from which it was separated by an act of arbitrariness in 1812, was reunited with the Motherland of its own free will, expressed by its representatives." Since this accession is recognized by the great powers, "the question of the reunification of Bessarabia with Romania is finally closed, and the Romanian Government does not intend to discuss it in the future. It only remains for Romania and Russia to clarify among themselves the secondary issues that cause any change in sovereignty and which are in principle settled by the said agreement. If Moscow so desires, it may apply to the Council of the League of Nations "with regard to particular questions related to this reunification, without, of course, touching upon the question of the borders and sovereign rights of Romania, which are henceforth not subject to discussion." The Romanian government again asked to be informed which particular issues the Soviet side considers disputable³⁴⁵ .

Peace or War By

the end of 1920, large-scale hostilities in European Russia had ceased. In the second half of October 1920, the fighting on the Soviet-Polish front ended, and on November 17, Soviet-Polish negotiations began in Riga. Formally, a truce was concluded between the parties, which had yet to be turned into a full-fledged peace treaty. It is clear that Moscow tried to normalize relations with Romania, which was getting closer and closer to Poland. Now the main problem of the Soviet government was the neutralization of the remnants of the anti-Soviet forces that had retreated to the territory of Poland and Romania. On November 23, the Soviet government sent a note to Romania, in which it noted that during the fighting in the Mogilev-Podolsky region, the detachments defeated by the Red Army "crossed the Dniester in order to find refuge in Bessarabia, where the Romanian authorities accepted officers and carts, refusing only soldiers." Moscow expressed the hope that the Romanian government would intern these officers³⁴⁶ .

On November 24, in a note to the Romanian government, Moscow reported that "the former General Wrangel, the leader of the Crimean rebels, now defeated, intends to transport the remnants of his army to Constanta and prepare a new attack on Russia on Romanian territory." Based on Bucharest's repeated statements about maintaining neutrality, the Soviet government counted on its "resolute opposition to Wrangel's intentions and hopes that any attempt on his part or on the part of other rebels to violate the neutrality of the Romanian territory will be suppressed by all means at your disposal"³⁴⁷. On November 28, the Romanian side stated that it had "no information about General Wrangel's violation of the neutrality of Romania, expressed in the transportation of troops to Constanta or in the preparation of an attack on Russia on Romanian territory." Moreover, Romania could never allow such a violation of its neutrality. "As for the armed forces that crossed into the territory of the Romanian Kingdom through the border line of the Dniester, these troops were disarmed by us and the soldiers, as well as officers, were interned"³⁴⁸ .

At the same time, the representative of Romania at informal talks in London, D. Ciotori, had several conversations with the Soviet representative, L.B. Krasin, who stated that "the Soviet government has accurate information that Romania would be disposed to provide asylum to Wrangel and his officers and even allow the restoration of the army of this general on its territory." If this happens, then Moscow will certainly regard it as "an act hostile to Russia." In response, Ciotori recalled that since the beginning of the Russian revolution, Romania has been pursuing a policy of "neutrality and good neighborliness", so such an assumption is completely absurd. Then Krasin drew the interlocutor's attention to the fact that Moscow tends to believe that Romania harbors "secret intentions against Russia, since it does not agree to start peace negotiations for anything and under any condition." It is clear that Chiyotori tried to refute these fears, referring to

peace-loving policy of Bucharest. Krasin pointed out that a possible transfer by Romania of "military materials and equipment left over from the Russian armies on the Romanian front to Wrangel or other enemies of the Bolsheviks" would be regarded by Moscow as a provocative act. Ciotori stated that until Romania "receives the compensation due to her both for material values and for her valuables which are held in Russia", she will not transfer anything to anyone.

Then Krasin turned to the issue of Bessarabia and stated that "the protest of the Soviet government regarding the signing of the treaty on Bessarabia was made only formally and [is] a matter of pride." Therefore, "the Soviet government ... is disposed to recognize the unification of Bessarabia with Romania only on the condition that peace negotiations between Romania and Russia begin immediately." However, according to Ciotori, this statement was a bluff, since "the Russians will not recognize and will not join for anything to the treaty on Bessarabia signed in Paris, for the following reasons: a) they think that as soon as Romania receives their signature, she will never agree to discuss peace with Russia again; b) the signing of this treaty would mean that the Moscow government unconditionally submitted to the decisions of the Entente, which, however, it does not recognize and with which it is at war. The Romanian diplomat himself believed that there was a threat to Romania from the east, and believed that "the only way to stop the actions of the Russians against us would be to accept their offer to start peace negotiations, declaring that Romania reserves the right to put forward its conditions at a peace conference. Then it would be possible to raise the question of Bessarabia in the way we wish."349

On December 12, the Romanian government, recalling its positive response to the Soviet request to prevent Wrangel troops from entering Romanian territory, asked about the reasons for the "concentration of Russian troops on the Dniester border"350. On December 14, Moscow again reminded Bucharest of its proposal for peace talks, where the whole range of issues of interest to both sides could be considered, and requested information on the number of internees on Romanian territory351. On December 16, the Romanian side announced that it had interned 440 soldiers and 150 officers with 4 cannons and 50 horses in total, and recalled its request regarding Soviet troops near the Dniester352. On December 24, the Soviet side notified Bucharest that the deployment of Soviet troops near the Dniester was connected with the conditions for their quartering and that it "had no aggressive intentions towards Romania"353.

In December 1920, the commander of the troops of the Southwestern Front submitted a report to the commander-in-chief of the Red Army on the tasks of defending Soviet territory in the event of a war with Poland and Romania in the spring of 1921. It was proposed to prepare defensive lines on the outskirts of the largest railway junctions and build the Kiev fortified area with an advanced defensive line along the river. Grouse. From the side of Romania, the Dniester was to become the advanced defensive line, and the rear - the river. Southern Bug. It was also necessary to create fortifications on the outskirts of Odessa and advanced strongholds in Kamenetz-Podolsk, Staraya Ushitsa, Mogilev-Podolsky, Yampol, Rybnitsa, Dubossary, Tiraspol and near Soroca. This task was facilitated by the fact that the construction of a number of these points began in the summer of 1920. In addition, it was necessary to strengthen the defense of the Odessa-Zhmerinka railway using armored trains there. On the Southern Bug it was necessary to build fortifications at the largest crossings354.

According to Soviet intelligence, on December 15, 1920, the Eastern Army of Romania (headquarters - Iasi, commander - General A. Lupescu) was stationed in Bessarabia and Bukovina as part of the 2nd Army Corps (3rd, 4th infantry divisions; deployment - Chisinau, Orhei), 3rd Army Corps (5th, 6th Infantry Divisions; deployment - Chisinau, Galati) and 4th Army Corps (2nd, 7th and 8th Infantry Divisions; deployment - Iasi, Balti, Chernivtsi, Roman). Soviet intelligence believed that in the event of mobilization, the Romanian Eastern Army, consisting of 8 infantry divisions and 3 cavalry brigades, would have up to 200 thousand people, 1 thousand guns, 4 thousand machine guns and 25 tanks355. According to Soviet intelligence, in the period January 1 - February 15, 1921, the troops of the Romanian Eastern Army numbered 63.4 thousand bayonets, 6.3 thousand sabers, 2,296 machine guns, 496 guns and 25 tanks (which accounted for 41.5% bayonets, 58.9% of sabers, 47.7% of machine guns, 54.3% of guns and 50% of tanks of the total number of the Romanian army)356.

On January 5, 1921, the Romanian Foreign Minister T. Ionescu again informed Moscow of Bucharest's invariably peaceful position and that Romania was not at war with Russia. Therefore, "in our opinion, the point is not to negotiate peace between Romania and Russia, which has never been violated, but to settle issues that could arise in relations between the two countries as a result of the events that took place during the last years." If the Soviet side agrees with such a position, then it would be good for it to report on those issues that "should be the subject of negotiations between both sides"357.

On January 15, Moscow sent a note to Bucharest, which noted that "the Russian Government takes note with pleasure of your statement about the peace-loving and correct attitude of the Romanian Government towards the Russian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics. I can assure you that the Russian Republic, for its part, is completely averse to any attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Romania or other hostile acts and has firmly resolved not to allow any violation of the peaceful relations currently established between Russia and Romania. It is all the more desirable, in the opinion of the Russian Government, to enter into negotiations with Romania in order to establish mutual relations between the two countries on a firm basis of an agreement. Romania was invited to hold a conference with the participation of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, which could

resolve all "without exception questions" of interest to both parties. If Romania is not ready to discuss all issues, then the RSFSR proposed to discuss only the issues of "restoring commercial relations" and navigation on the Dniester³⁵⁸.

In its response note dated January 31, the Romanian government stated that the Soviet side agreed that "there is no state of war between Romania and Russia. It naturally follows from this that both countries are in a state of peace. Since Moscow mentioned some issues that could be the subject of negotiations, Ionescu suggested that both sides send a delegate to Riga, where it would be possible to agree on a negotiation program³⁵⁹. On the same day, in London, Ciotori again talked with Krasin and drew his attention to the importance for Romania of resolving the issue of her documents, manuscripts, and similar materials remaining in Russia. Since the issue of gold was not raised, Krasin believed that this was a hint at a possible agreement regarding Bessarabia: gold in exchange for the recognition of this region as part of Romania³⁶⁰. On

February 7, Moscow notified Bucharest of its agreement with its proposal for negotiations and the appointment of M.M. Litvinov. Revel [Tallinn]³⁶¹ was proposed as a place for negotiations. On February 10, Romania, for its part, announced its agreement to the talks in Reval and asked to indicate the date for the start of these talks³⁶². On February 15, the Soviet side drew the attention of the Romanian government to the fact that "in the area adjacent to the Bessarabian border, rebellious White Guard bands raised uprisings against the Soviet Governments of Russia and Ukraine, and the Bessarabian territory served as the base for all operations. The Romanian administration, exercising power in Bessarabia, not only does not oppose the rebellions based on Bessarabia, but, on the contrary, supports them. So, for example, on February 5, a gang of Petliura cavalry under the command of a Petliura officer crossed the Bessarabian border from Romanian territory and entered Ukrainian territory. Similar facts were repeated several times, which requires constant vigilance and the use of armed force on the part of the Russian and Ukrainian military authorities. The Soviet government protested against such actions of the Romanian authorities and drew the attention of Bucharest to "the danger posed by these facts for peace and the successful outcome of negotiations with Romania"³⁶³. The Soviet

leadership found itself in a difficult position. As Rakovsky, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, correctly emphasized in a telegram on February 17 in a telegram to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR, "concluding an agreement with Romania is an extremely difficult task, because, on the one hand, we have to regulate navigation on the Dniester, on the other hand, to avoid indications that Bessarabia given to Romania. Therefore, the whole task will be to ensure that the articles of the treaty relating to borders are of a temporary nature. In concluding this preliminary condition, I believe that the main purpose of the treaty should be to secure for us maximum neutrality on the part of Romania. Second: commodity exchange; third: exchange of representations. Bucharest is an extremely important observation point for the entire Balkan Peninsula and Central Europe." As the main issues in the negotiations, it was necessary to agree with the Romanians on the neutralization of the entire Dniester estuary, increase the line of territorial waters from 3 to 12 versts and support the demand for the neutralization of the Black Sea straits, which Romania also puts forward. It was also necessary to achieve the participation of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR in the Danube International Commission, to resolve the issue of the exchange of former prisoners of war and to conclude various economic conventions. Rakovsky resolutely objected to raising the question of the option, referring to the fact that "we cannot in

any way assume the obligation to consider the Bessarabians who are on the territory of Russia and Ukraine as Romanian citizens"³⁶⁴. February 13, 1921 Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army S.S. Kamenev sent the commander of all the armed forces of Ukraine and Crimea M.V. Frunze directive No. 803 / op / ss, in which he indicated that "the military-political situation on the western borders of the RSFSR, perhaps in the near future, will put the Red Army again before the armed defense of the borders of the RSFSR." The White Guard formations on the territory of Poland, the Wrangel army and the troops of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania appeared as probable opponents. The strongest adversaries would be Poland and Romania, while the rest of the western neighbors would either become allies of Poland or remain neutral. "Our common task in the west is to defend the borders of the RSFSR from the invasion of enemies." Accordingly, the troops were required to: "a) Repel an armed invasion and inflict a decisive defeat on the White Guard formations produced on the territory of our neighboring states, as well as repel any landing attempts by the Wrangel army on our Black Sea shores. b) Inflict a decisive defeat on the armies of our neighboring

The directive indicated several options for the operational actions of the Soviet troops, depending on the general situation. Among other things, there was a "PR" option, which provided that "when Poland came out together with Romania, with the partial participation or neutrality of a group of northern neighboring states, our plan is based on inflicting a decisive defeat on the most powerful and dangerous army of Poland and expectant actions against those remote from the main objects Romanian Wars. The Western Front, deployed in this case, delivers the main blow in Belarus, and the troops of the South-Western Front are operating in Eastern Galicia, simultaneously leading an active defense against Romania and defending the Black Sea coast to Kerch³⁶⁵. Accordingly, Frunze, by his directive No. 2812 / no / ss of February 25, demanded that the headquarters of the Kyiv (KVO) and Kharkov (HVO) military districts by March 10 submit their views on

these options for the actions of the Soviet troops³⁶⁶. In pursuance of this directive, on March 23-24, the headquarters of the KVO prepared reports on two options for the actions of the troops in the event of a war with Poland,³⁶⁷ which, according to the operational documents of the Soviet command, was considered at that time as potential enemy No. 1.

In the meantime, on February 18, Moscow received a reply from Bucharest, which denied the possibility of the Petliura detachments entering the territory of Ukraine and requested exact information about the alleged incident in order to "conduct an investigation"³⁶⁸. On March 3, 1921, a Polish-Romanian mutual assistance treaty was signed, which provided for mutual military support in the event that the eastern borders of Poland or Romania were subjected to an unprovoked attack (Article 1); mutual consultations and coordination of the policy of both countries in relation to the eastern neighbors (art. 2); the conclusion of the Polish-Romanian military convention (art. 3) and the obligation not to conclude peace and not to conduct separate negotiations in case of war (art. 4). The term of the contract was set at 5 years³⁶⁹. It is clear that, having learned about the conclusion of this agreement, on March 13, Chicherin drew Litvinov's attention to the need to clarify the question, what do the Romanians want - "put up with us or fight"?³⁷⁰ At that time, a new interstate association arose in the Balkans - the Little Entente. It began on August 14, 1920, when a military agreement was signed between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. On April 23, 1921, a Romanian-Czechoslovak agreement was concluded against Hungary, and on June 7, 1921, a Romanian-Yugoslav agreement against Hungary and Bulgaria³⁷¹.

On March 15, Romania notified the RSFSR that G. Filality, who is a commissar in Constantinople, had been appointed representative at the talks in Reval. The time of his possible arrival in Revel was supposed to be announced after his return to Bucharest³⁷². Thus, the Romanian leadership has shown that the problem of an agreement with Moscow is not of much interest to him. It is clear that the Soviet government continued to seek the start of negotiations with Romania, which remained after the conclusion of the Soviet-Polish treaty of March 18, 1921, the only western neighbor, relations with which were still not regulated by a specific agreement. On March 23, Moscow again drew the attention of Bucharest to the fact that "the Romanian troops stationed along the Dniester not only protect the White Guard detachments and facilitate their crossing of the river in order to attack the Russian and Ukrainian armed forces, but also commit actions directly hostile to the latter. So, for example, on March 12, the Romanian troops heavily shelled the town of Yaruga, southeast of Mogilev [-Podolsky], and on March 14 they repeated this shelling with even greater energy. The Soviet side protested against such actions and demanded their cessation³⁷³. On the same day, Romania was told that Moscow was waiting for a message about the day of the arrival of the Romanian representative in Revel³⁷⁴. On March 25, Ionescu informed Chicherin that there

could be no attacks by "Romanian troops on Russian and Ukrainian units", although he agreed to investigate these facts. For its part, Romania put forward counterclaims about the facts of shelling of the Romanian troops from the Soviet coast³⁷⁵. On April 9, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR sent a note to Romania, in which they indicated that Romanian warships were attacking Soviet fishing boats in the Dniester Estuary. Accordingly, Moscow and Kiev demanded "the immediate removal of all warships from the Dniester estuary" and declared that the appearance of Romanian warships "in its waters will be considered by them as a hostile act, against which all measures necessary to protect our shores will be taken." At the same time, the Soviet republics proposed to Romania "to form a mixed commission ... to develop the statute of the Dniester estuary and the rules for navigation in its waters"³⁷⁶. On April 12, Ionescu informed Chicherin that the facts of the shelling of the Soviet coast by the Romanian troops were not confirmed. Practice firing took place in this area, but not a single shell flew across the river. In the same way, he denied the fact that armed Romanian ships had fired on Soviet watercraft on the estuary, pointing out that it was from the Soviet coast that fire had been opened on these Romanian ships. Nevertheless, Romania accepted the proposal to create a mixed commission on the estuary, but saw the main task of this commission in setting buoys along a line equidistant from both banks. Moscow was again reminded that soon the Romanian representative would be able to go to Reval³⁷⁷.

Incidents on the Dniester

On April 29, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR declared that they could not accept the Romanian explanations for the incidents on the Dniester, where the "trial" shooting of the Romanian troops led to "a known number of wounded in Ukrainian towns located on the left bank of this river." The Soviet governments reiterated that "in fact, it has been established that groups, and sometimes entire gangs of counter-revolutionaries - Petliurists, previously formed in Bessarabia, are crossing the river under the protection of the Romanian occupying troops." The note expressed the hope that the Romanian government would report on the measures it had taken to stop such actions³⁷⁸.

According to the report of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and Crimea A.T. Anders dated April 18, 1921 to the chief of staff of the troops of the Republic and the chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR, the following incidents took place on the Dniester: bombs began to be thrown from our posts, and at the same time a bullet fire was opened from the side of the rumberg. February 21 in the Slobodzeya area, 10 versts south

Tiraspol, a Red Army soldier was wounded by a shot from Romania. On February 28, an artillery shot was fired from the side, and the shell exploded on our territory 2 versts east of Tiraspol. Repeated lighting of our coast and territory with room spotlights (on the night of January 6, 11, February 2, 8 - in the area of the Dniester Estuary, on the night of January 10 - the Belyaevka-Mayaki section). Shelling from the side on April 4 near Cape Kuchier, 5 versts north of Dubossary, of our patrols"379. On April 19, Moscow and Kyiv again

protested against the hostile actions of the Romanian courts in the estuary. Having refused to divide the estuary into two equal parts, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR proposed to establish a single regime on the entire estuary, capable of eliminating all pretexts for conflict with the Romanians³⁸⁰. After consideration of this issue by military experts, the Romanian government on May 10 agreed with the Soviet proposal to create a "mixed commission to establish a single regime in the waters of the Dniester Estuary"³⁸¹. On May 19, Moscow offered Odessa as a place for negotiations, but on May 25, Romania put forward a proposal to organize the work of the commission on a ship in the middle of the estuary³⁸². On June 1, the Soviet side agreed with this proposal and notified Bucharest that V.I. Yakovlev, and its members are representatives of the General Staff A.I. Medel and the Main Naval Staff G.N. Stepanov³⁸³. The Soviet delegation was tasked with achieving the neutralization of the estuary and ensuring the freedom of merchant shipping and fishing. The delegation was required "to take into account the fact that we did not recognize the appropriation of Bessarabia by Romania and when we talk about Bessarabia, we consider it an occupied region ... When it comes to the Bessarabian coast, we will have to avoid such expressions that could be interpreted as recognition of Bessarabia as part Romania"³⁸⁴. On July 10, meetings of the Soviet-Romanian mixed commission on the problem of the Dniester Estuary began. However, this issue turned out to be too closely connected with the problem of determining the border, and on July 22, at the initiative of the Soviet side, the negotiations were interrupted for an indefinite period³⁸⁵.

Meanwhile, on May 23, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR again protested against the hostile actions of the Romanian troops on the Dniester, where on May 11 in the Mogilev-Podolsk region "60 shots were fired at Russian and Ukrainian troops"³⁸⁶. On May 27, Bucharest denied such incidents, and regarding the shelling of Soviet territory on May 11 in the area of Mogilev-Podolsky, he proposed creating a mixed commission to investigate this incident³⁸⁷. On June 16, Ionescu sent a telegram to Moscow, in which he indicated that "on the night of June 1, at two o'clock, at a distance of one verst from the Romanian village of Vascautsi, the following border incident took place: a Romanian patrol seized on our shore a group of armed soldiers who had arrived on two barges, and shot them. To this he was answered with volleys of rifles, and then on our bank and on the Ukrainian bank, quite close to the same place, other barges appeared with soldiers trying to cross the Dniester in order to enter Bessarabia. When our soldiers fired at these barges, they were answered with fierce fire from the Ukrainian coast. Both those who crossed over to our shore, and those who tried to do so, crossed to the other shore. During this incident, shots were fired from both sides. Another incident took place at midnight between June 2 and 3, when gangs armed with revolvers and guns crossed the Dniester and attacked our picket [...] in Gruzenwitz. In the ensuing struggle, those who crossed to our shore left one dead, on our side one soldier was wounded.

Having received this note, Chicherin on June 19 notified Bucharest that an investigation into the indicated facts would be carried out³⁸⁹. A corresponding request was sent to the headquarters of the CMD, which, in turn, requested the headquarters of the border division guarding the banks of the Dniester³⁹⁰. Having received a response from the headquarters of the border division at 22 o'clock on June 20, the chief of staff of the KVO I.Kh. Spider on June 21 sent the following message to Moscow: "According to the report of the head of the border division, not a single Red Army soldier of the border division took part in both incidents. According to the same report, both cases actually took place: from June 1 to June 2, in the area of the village of Vyshkovtsy, which is 7 versts up the Dniester from the mouth of the Yagorlyk, agents of special post No. 6 of the special department worked and the second case from June 2 to 3 near Khotyn, where, according to the head of special department No. 4,

agents of Zakordot worked. Further investigation of both cases is carried out by the head of the special department of the KVO"³⁹¹. On June 23, the head of the border division, in response to a request from the head of the special department of the CMD, reported that "on the territory of the border guard of the division, there were no cases of our troops crossing the Romanian border"³⁹². On July 19, the head of the special department of the KVO, Vorontsov, sent a report to Moscow, Kyiv and Kharkov, which contains the most detailed results of the investigation of these incidents. "On the night of May 31 to June 1, in the village of Isakovtsy (the confluence of the Zbruch River with the Dniester), employees of Zakordot crossed to the rum side without the knowledge of the Special Point, where they raided a Romanian patrol of 3 people, of whom one was seized and transported to our side, the other two Romanians fled. The head of the Romanian cordon turned to the head of Special Point No. 1 for an explanation of this incident. It was announced that the raid was carried out by some bandits, who, after crossing to our side, were arrested along with a Romanian soldier and sent to Kamenetz [-Podolsk]. On the night of June 2-3, in the area of the village of Maryanovka (12-15 versts southeast of Kamenetz-Podolsk), employees of Zakordot crossed to the Rum side without the knowledge of the Special Point, on the night of June 3-3, on the report of the same border guard department, who raided the village of Grushevtsy (on the Romanian side)) Romanian gendarmerie cordon. As a result, 1 fighter was killed, and the other was wounded, whom the fighters managed to transfer to our side. The deceased was left in Romania. The transfer point of the Odessa Zakordot reports on this incident: on the night of June 2 to 3, a military armed detachment, numbering ... a person (omission in t

Khotinsky district and having a base on our side, while carrying out the task entrusted to him, he collided in the village of Grushevtsy with soldiers of the Romanian border guards. As a result, our detachment lost 1 comrade killed and 1 slightly wounded. The Romanians lost 2 people seriously wounded, who soon died. The place of crossing of our detachment (the village of Maryanovka) is completely unknown to the Romanians, just as it is not known where the detachment came from and where it disappeared.

According to a report on the night of June 5-6, the village of Braga on the Dniester (10 versts east of Khotyn) was supposed to be a crossing to the room side of the room spies. At the indicated place, the Red Army found 5-6 people sitting in a ditch, dressed in black suits, signaling to the room side by means of electric lamps. The Red Army soldiers opened fire on these persons. The spies began firing their revolvers. At the same time, strong rifle fire opened up from Romania, thanks to which our Red Army men were forced to retreat. Returning some time later with reinforcements to the same place, the Red Army did not find anything. According to the report of the same Department, on the night of June 5-6, vil. Luki, which is 30 miles east of Khotyn along the Dniester. The shooting continued until almost morning. According to inquiries made in the Romanian villages of Vilyamovka and Grushevtsy, 5 and 10 versts southwest of the Studenitsa metro station, there was a raid on the Romanian border units, due to which the Romanians opened fire on the nearby forest, in which bandits were suspected. Bullets landed on our side in the area of the village of Luka.

Conclusion: the Romanians know from reliable sources that their soldier, captured on the night of June 2-3, is in the government of Soviet Ukraine, but they do not know for certain whether he was captured by bandits or government officials, which is evidenced by the persecution carried out by the Romanian troops to the residents of Grushevtsy, suspected of attacking the cordon of guards on the night of June 2-3. Also, according to the census of the population in the border zone, where if there is no young man, then the Romanians consider them Bolsheviks, who are in gangs, their property is taken into account³⁹³. It is clear that neither the Soviet nor the Romanian sides were going to admit their responsibility for these incidents. On July 1, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR notified

Romania that, as an investigation of the facts indicated in their telegram of June 16, showed, "none of the military personnel of the few Red Army units ... took part in the incidents mentioned. The armed men who attacked the Romanian patrols in Bessarabia on the indicated days belonged, in all likelihood, to some gangs or detachments of unknown origin, whose presence on the banks of the Dniester is the result of the excessive tolerance of the Romanian military authorities towards Petliurists and other anti-Soviet Ukrainian elements. . Several such persons, who took a Romanian soldier with them and crossed the Dniester ... were arrested by the Ukrainian authorities and sent to Kamenetz-Podolsk." All these incidents were the result of insufficient Soviet military forces on the Dniester, which is associated with the unwillingness of the Romanian side to arouse any suspicion in the event of a reinforcement of Soviet troops there. At the same time, the Soviet governments protested against new shelling by the Romanian troops of the Soviet bank of the Dniester: on the night of June 5-6, the village of Luki (20 versts from Kamenetz-Podolsk) suffered from the Romanian shelling and demanded that the Romanian government stop supporting anti-Soviet elements and the hostile actions of the Romanian troops³⁹⁴ .

On July 7, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR announced a new attack by the Romanian troops on their troops. June 5th, at 2:00 p.m. 15 minutes in the morning, from the side of Lipkan, near Bender, the Romanian forces opened heavy fire on the Russian and Ukrainian troops located on the other side of the river. For two hours, the Soviet troops were subjected to continuous shelling, without reacting in any way, but then, considering it impossible to continue to remain a passive object of this attack, they fired 45 shots of buckshot at the Romanian forces, which then ceased hostilities. No actions that could provoke the Romanian units were taken from the Soviet side, therefore the Soviet republics "declare a strong protest against this new attack by the Romanian army"³⁹⁵. On July 13, Ionescu promised to investigate these facts. On July 17, the Romanian side notified the RSFSR that "on the night of July 2-3, at 23:00 ... your soldiers fired on our post in Soloncheni and wounded 11 of our soldiers"³⁹⁷. On July 27, the Soviet side promised to investigate this incident, but drew the attention of the Romanian side to the fact that "On July 13, a military post located in Podoyma, 10 versts northwest of Kamenka, was attacked by a detachment of Romanian soldiers who crossed the Dniester near Orini. After a fierce battle, the landing detachment was driven back across the Dniester. On August 8, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR declared that the facts reported in a telegram from Bucharest dated July 17 were not confirmed by the investigation³⁹⁹ .

According to Soviet intelligence, on August 1, 1921, the Romanian army was estimated at 182,270 bayonets, 14,013 sabers, 6,329 machine guns and 1,011 guns, of which 78,270 bayonets, 9,763 sabers, 2,774 machine guns and 483 guns were in the Eastern army, uniting 6 infantry and 1 cavalry divisions⁴⁰⁰. True, according to the intelligence report of September 15, it was believed that "Rumtroops are concentrated in Bessarabia solely to repel the offensive of the Red troops. On the part of Rumania, they do not want war, but they are very afraid of the Red offensive . In the summer of 1921, Soviet

troops fought against the Petlyura detachments, which were crossing the territory of the Ukrainian SSR from Poland, and against various local bandit formations. The high intensity of the fighting created the impression in the Soviet command that the enemy was preparing some kind of major performance, and intelligence reported on the transfer of Petliura units from Poland to Bessarabia⁴⁰². Accordingly, the headquarters of the KVO continued to develop operational plans in the event of an expansion of hostilities. So, August 10 temporarily

acting commander of the troops of the KVO N.N. Petin submitted report No. 38820/ÿÿ "Operational considerations in the event of an offensive against Poland and Romania" to the commander of all the armed forces of Ukraine and the Crimea. This document stated that "in the event that Poland and Romania let the armed forces of the counter-revolutionary organizations of Petliura, Savinkov and Wrangel cross the state border, the Federation of Soviet Republics will certainly face the question of not only eliminating this adventure, but also opening hostilities against the Poles and Romanians.

In this case, I think that the initial object of our actions should be the Polish army, firstly, as a stronger one and, secondly, as operating in the Kovel-Kiev or Lvov-Kiev operational direction, which is more dangerous for us. The defeat of the Romanian army cannot be a priority task, since our maneuver group will be under the threat of a flank attack and can be pressed against the Black Sea. Based on the military-geographical features of the theater of operations, the political situation in Galicia, the deployment of the armies of Poland and Romania and the construction of the Dubno-Rovno UR, "I consider it most beneficial for us, when operating against the Poles, to choose the main operational direction in the Starokonstantinov, Volochisk, Brody, Proskurov zone, Tarnopol, Lviv. This will allow the fortified area to reach the rear and, hiding behind the Dniester, be near the junction of the Polish-Romanian border. "A strike in the indicated direction should be preceded by an offensive by parts of the Kharkov district in the general direction of Chisinau, Iasi, in order to divert the main forces of the Romanian army. At the same time, a separate detachment should be put forward to occupy Bukovina, which will immediately expand the gap at the junction of Romania with Poland.

If neutrality is violated only by Rumania, then, taking into account the Soviet-Polish treaty and the internal situation in Poland, she may refuse to come to the aid of Rumania. Then "the most correct decision on our part would be to deliver a lightning-fast, crushing blow to the Romanian army, to seize Bessarabia and with this success to finally tie up the initiative of the Polish army, and most importantly, to morally suppress it. In this case, our main operational direction will be Tiraspol, Chisinau, Iasi, along which the army should be sent as part of the 30th, 51st and 52nd rifle divisions and the 3rd cavalry corps. From the side of the Kyiv military district, an auxiliary operation by the army, consisting of the 15th, 24th and 45th rifle divisions [...] and the 1st cavalry corps, should be undertaken. The task of this army is to advance behind enemy lines defending the Yassy region, approximately in the direction of Mogilev-Podolsky, Nyamtsy (90 miles west of Yassy) and capture the city of Chernivtsi. Against Poland, the troops of the KVO will create barriers in the areas of Zhitomir, Chudnov, Berdichev and Letichev, Novaya Ushitsa, Zhmerinka403. At the same time, the Soviet leadership made diplomatic efforts, seeking to normalize the situation on the western border.

On August 13, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR sent a note to Romania, in which they reported that, according to Soviet intelligence, in Bendery, at the Romanian headquarters, there is a "rebel Ukrainian headquarters, headed by a certain Pshennik", subordinate to the chief military commissioner of the UNR government, Gulyai-Gulenko and keeping in touch with gangs in Ukraine. Gulyai-Gulenko, on behalf of the Petliura government, oversees the UNR military internee camps, where "he was allowed, with the assistance of General Delvig, to recruit volunteers from there to create detachments that were to be sent to Ukraine." Petlyura's units from Galicia in June were transferred to Bessarabia, from where they are preparing to start military operations against the Ukrainian SSR after the harvest. The Romanian government maintains official relations with the representative of the UNR "Macievich, who is in Bucharest and enjoys the rights of a diplomatic representative." Declaring their desire to develop good-neighborly relations and fully restore normal diplomatic and economic relations with Romania, Moscow and Kiev "count on the adoption by the Romanian Government of urgent measures to eliminate all causes" that worsen their relationship. Romania should have stopped all moral and material support for the "Petliura and counter-revolutionary organizations" and expelled their leaders from the territory of Romania, Bukovina and Bessarabia, disbanded the detachments they created and stopped diplomatic relations with the UNR government. In order to assist the Romanian government "in the destruction of bands organized on the territory of Bessarabia and Romania for the purpose of aggressive actions against the Soviet Republics", the governments of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR "consider it necessary when pursuing these bands, if they cross into the territory occupied by the Romanian authorities, to pursue and in this latter territory, notifying the Romanian authorities of this in time so that these actions of the Ukrainian and Russian Red troops would not be interpreted as actions directed, in any degree, against the Romanian people and the Romanian Government. On August 20, Ionescu informed Chicherin that there were no Petliura and White Guard troops in Romania and no. None of the named Petliura "representatives" are in Romania either, and

Bucharest "does not maintain official relations" with the UNR government. And although Moscow declares that it is not going to commit any hostile actions against Romania, "between June and August 15, the Red Army tried twelve times and managed to cross the Dniester several times, firing from the Russian coast on the Romanian coast." In particular, "at 11 p.m. on June 4, the Tohatinsky patrol was attacked by a group that crossed the Dniester in a boat under the cover of rifle fire from the Russian coast. June 22 at 13:00 the same thing happened to our post at Mayaki on the Dniester estuary. 4 thousand Russian rubles, 9 Hungarian grenades and 30 cartridges with explosive bullets were found in the boat. On the night of 4 to 5 July, at zero o'clock, at two

kilometers north of the Tiginsky bridge, in front of Lipkany, 4 boats tried to cross the Dniester with the support of rifle and machine-gun fire from the Russian coast. Similar attacks took place on the morning of July 8 in Kitskany, on the night of July 8-9 in Macula de Piatra, and on the afternoon of July 18 north of Telitsa. On the morning of the 24th, our post near the village of Ustye was attacked by 30 Red Army soldiers who had crossed the Dniester. On August 6, an attempt to cross near Tigina [Bender] was made by two boats. On August 12 and 13, a gang of 15-20 people managed to cross the Dniester 20 km south of Dubossary and robbed the inhabitants of the village of Chimisany. On the night of August 13-14, a significant number of horsemen crossed the Dniester in the Ivanichi region and, penetrating into the village of Inautsy, robbed the householder and two Jews. On the night of the 14th to the 15th, they attacked a Romanian post in the village of Korzhevo in the Dubossary region. I'm not talking about the Khotyn area, where such attacks happen daily."

Although Romania does not blame the Soviet governments for these incidents, it states that "if there are bandit attacks, incursions, sorties, they are carried out on your side, not on ours." Naturally, the Romanian government cannot agree to "the troops of a neighboring state crossing our border"⁴⁰⁵. On August 26, Ionescu reported to Moscow about a new incident at Bendery. "Between 6 and 8 o'clock, several people tried to cross the Dniester in longboats; our patrols prevented their crossing", but came under fire from rifles and machine guns from the east coast⁴⁰⁶. Soviet border guards also recorded numerous hostile actions from the

Romanian side. Operational and information report No. 105 of the department for combating banditry of the VUCHK reported that "on the night of July 29, 1921, between Strokantsy and Beloch, the Romanians made an attempt to land on 3 boats, but met by our fire, were forced to return back, during One Romanian was wounded in a skirmish" On September 1, Akimov, the Chief of Staff of the Cheka troops of Ukraine, reported that "on the night ⁴⁰⁷ of August 22, it was unknown who, from the south side of Rybnitsa, made a light signal in the direction of the Rezina metro station. On the night of August 23, armaments for two hours fired at the eastern bank of the Dniester from the village of Yertzhev, which is 5-7 versts north of Rybnitsa, with a rare rifle fire. During the shelling from the side of the Chernaya village, the Romanians threw 2 red rockets"⁴⁰⁸. According to the intelligence report for the period from August 15 to September 15, "in the Soroca region, according to reports from military units, frequent shelling of our posts with rifle and machine-gun fire from the Romanian coast was noted. A case of shooting from the Romanians was also noted in the area of the village of Grigoriopol (40 versts east of Bendery). A crossing from the Romanian coast of trained dogs for the transfer of correspondence was noticed. According to the Romanian press, as a result of the attempt of the Red detachments on August 6-7 to cross the Dniester, General Ruzhinsky took measures to strengthen the border guard .

In September 1921, the situation on the Soviet western border escalated. The famine that arose in the summer in Soviet Russia gave rise to hope in the West that the power of the Bolsheviks would soon fall, and the Entente decided to push things. On September 3, France offered Poland to send an ultimatum to the RSFSR, in case of rejection of which it was necessary to start a war. For its part, Paris also promised to send an ultimatum to Moscow and persuade Romania to do so. However, Soviet diplomacy, having learned about these intentions, made them public⁴¹⁰. Naturally, Poland and France stated that there were no proposals. True, this did not prevent Poland from asking Germany what concessions on the Upper Silesian issue would allow Warsaw to count on the neutrality of Berlin in the event of a new Soviet-Polish war⁴¹¹. On September 5, Poland closed the eastern border, pulling additional gendarmerie forces there. The workers of the Soviet embassy in Warsaw found themselves under the demonstrative supervision of the Polish police, and the situation on the Soviet-Polish border escalated. For its part, on September 9, Moscow again demanded that Warsaw stop helping the White Guards⁴¹² .

On September 14, Poland accused the RSFSR of failing to fulfill the Riga Treaty and put forward a number of demands that should have been met before October 1, otherwise threatening to break off diplomatic relations. On September 17, Moscow announced its agreement to fulfill some Polish demands if Poland removed the most prominent leaders of the White Guards from its territory by the same time and punished those responsible for their support. The next day, a Polish note was handed over to the Soviet side, confirming the above requirements and notifying Poland of its readiness to report on the measures taken against the crossing of the border by undesirable elements⁴¹³. England, Finland and Estonia also made claims against the RSFSR . In an effort to avoid an increase in confrontation, the RSFSR on September 22 proposed to Poland a specific program of measures to normalize relations on the basis of mutual implementation of the provisions of the Riga Treaty⁴¹⁵ . The publication of this note in the press led to the fact that Romania abandoned its intention to put forward its claims. It is clear that in Moscow they feared

the outbreak of war, therefore, the RVSR, by its protocol No. 145 of September 21, 1921, decided that "in view of the situation created in connection with the Polish ultimatum and in view of the need to keep the army at the ready, which is completely incompatible with demobilization, reorganization and the resulting demobilization moods", it is necessary to "suspend all resolutions and orders on dismissal on indefinite leave, disbandment of units and institutions until the current situation is clarified." The Council of Labor and Defense (STO) of the RSFSR must adopt a resolution on providing troops, primarily border troops, with food rations. It was proposed to strengthen the Revolutionary Military Council and the political departments of the Petrograd, Western, Kyiv and Kharkov military districts with experienced personnel,

The political administration of the Red Army needs to develop a plan for the mobilization of communists on the Western Front and take measures to intensify agitation in the border districts and to correctly announce all changes in Russia's relations with Poland and Romania. Prepare the draft of 1900 and 1901. birth and subsequent ages. "Immediately begin to separate the headquarters of the Cavalry Army from the headquarters of the North Caucasus Military District. Develop a transfer plan and proceed with the transfer of the Cavalry Army. Measures were envisaged for the preparation of stocks of weapons and food, the deployment of military production and evacuation in the districts. On September 22, by telegram via direct wire, the STO notified all district commanders of the suspension of demobilization, reorganization and disbandment of troops⁴¹⁶.

On September 23, 1921, the commander of all the armed forces of Ukraine and the Crimea, with his directive No. 43401ss, set tasks for the troops of the KVO and KhVO in the event of a war. The directive set out several options for action. According to the "PR" option, "the main task is to inflict a decisive defeat on the Polish army, as the most powerful; against Romania, the same expectant actions, as remote from the main objects of the war.

Tasks are assigned to the fronts:

1) On the Western Front - inflicting a quick and decisive defeat on the Polish army, an offensive in general direction to the Osovets-Bialystok-Brest-Litovsk front. 2)

On the Southwestern Front - a) covering the borders;

b) ensuring the mobilization and concentration of the armies of the front; c) securing the left flank of the advancing armies of the

Western Front; d) active defensive operations against Romania covering directions to Kyiv, Cherkassy, Kremenchug and

Yekaterinoslav; e) the defense of the Black Sea coast from the Dniester estuary to the Kerch Strait inclusive.

According to this option, "active defensive actions against Romania" should "result in delivering a blow in the direction of Iasi and capturing Bessarabia by us." The command of the districts was required to submit their views on all issues by October 5⁴¹⁷. Accordingly, the Soviet troops were brought to a state of high combat readiness and began preparations for the evacuation of valuable property from the border strip⁴¹⁸. However, the internal problems of the western neighbors of the Soviet republics and the firm, albeit constructive, position of Soviet diplomacy made it possible to find a compromise. As early as September 26, Poland declared its readiness to discuss Soviet proposals. As a result of the negotiations, on October 7, a Soviet-Polish protocol was signed on the settlement of mutual claims.

Conference in Warsaw

Meanwhile, on September 17, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR turned to Romania with a request to extradite N.I. Makhno and his associates⁴²⁰. On September 27, the Romanian government offered to submit documents from the courts on extradition and to undertake the obligation not to apply the death penalty to the extradited, since it has been abolished in Romania. In this case, the Romanian side will examine the case and decide on extradition⁴²¹. On October 22, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR indicated to Romania that its legal demands regarding the extradition of Makhno would be taken into account and the relevant materials would be submitted. But the activity of the Romanian authorities themselves in Bessarabia, which, contrary to the agreement of March 9, 1918, is still occupied, is replete with both violations of legal procedures and the use of the death penalty⁴²². On October 29, the Romanian side notified Moscow that it did not yet know whether Makhno was among those interned in Bessarabia. In general, the Soviet note of October 22 was characterized as interference in the internal affairs of Romania, although the Soviet proposal to discuss the problem of navigation on the Dniester, according to Bucharest, testified to the recognition by the Soviet side of the actual state of affairs⁴²³. On September 22, a Soviet-Romanian conference began in Warsaw, which

was supposed to "outline the program of a future conference that would put an end to the actual situation in relations between Russia and Romania." The Soviet delegation was headed by L.M. Karakhan, Romanian - G. Filality. According to the Soviet delegation, the following issues should have been considered at future negotiations: "The question of Bessarabia, currently occupied by Romanian troops, contrary to the agreement concluded between Russia and Romania on the cleansing of this area. Settlement of Russian-Romanian borders. Regulation of navigation on the Danube. Mutual payments. Resumption of trade relations. Resumption of diplomatic and consular relations. Protection of interests of national minorities. Mutual non-interference in the internal affairs of both countries. Elimination of gangs moving from Bessarabia to Ukrainian territory with criminal purposes. Convention on the Resumption of Postal, Telegraph and Railway Communications. The Romanian delegation refused to discuss the issue of Bessarabia at the conference, because, in its opinion, "from the historical and national point of view, Bessarabia

was an integral part of Romania until 1812; in terms of ethnicity, the population of Bessarabia is largely Romanian; from the point of view of the principle of nationalities, the population of Bessarabia joined their homeland by a decision adopted on March 20, 1918 by Sfatul Tarii, the parliament of the Moldavian Republic, recognized

the Kerensky government; the Romanian army crossed the Prut after the decision of Sfatul Tarii to join Romania and at the request of the Bessarabians. In the same way, the Romanian side refused to discuss the issue of national minorities and navigation on the Danube. With regard to gangs moving from Ukraine to Bessarabia, Filality suggested that mixed commissions be created for each such fact to investigate them. In general, the Romanian side proposed to discuss the following issues at a future conference: "The values that were in Russia as a contribution. The premises and property of the Romanian embassy in Petrograd. Deposits made by the Romanian supply commissions in Russian banks. Release, if possible, immediate, with permission to return to their homeland of the Romanians detained in Russia ... Russian refugees in Romania, as well as Russians from Wrangel's

army"⁴²⁴. On September 23, the parties agreed on the issue of discussing the problem of mutual settlements at a future conference. The question of navigation on the Danube, according to Filality, had already been decided in Paris, but he promised to ask Bucharest for instructions. When discussing the issue of national minorities, Karakhan referred to the Soviet-Polish treaty, in which this problem was reflected. As for Bessarabia, the Soviet delegation expressed the following opinion: "Bessarabia could not be an inseparable part of Romania, because the independence of Romania was recognized in 1878; from an ethnographic point of view, it is possible to prove the opposite of what [the Romanian side] claims; the fact that in 1920 Rumania sought to annex Bessarabia by means of a treaty with the sanction of the Great Powers proves that the acts of the Sfatul Tarii concerning the annexation of Bessarabia are by no means indisputable; the proclamation of the Moldavian Republic (January 24, 1918), as well as the formation of Sfatul Tarii itself, took place at the end of November 1917 after the overthrow of the Kerensky government; irrespective of the fact [that] "Sfatul Tsarii" did not have the authority to decide on the annexation of Bessarabia, its decisions were adopted under direct pressure from the military authorities and under the influence of administrative terror; an agreement signed by the Russian government and General Averescu (March 9, 1918) provided for the evacuation of Bessarabia

In a personal conversation with Filality, Karahan suggested that he avoid questions about Bessarabia, national minorities and Romanian values at a future conference. In his opinion, this would allow the restoration of diplomatic relations and the issue of Romanian values could be resolved later in a diplomatic manner. However, as Filality reported to Bucharest, in his opinion, "the Bolsheviks are aimed at only one thing: to restore relations with us, as they were restored with all the neighbors, and to send us 80–100 people to Bucharest, as they did here [in Warsaw], who will start propaganda." Accordingly, the Romanian representative believed that "to restore relations with the Bolsheviks would mean playing their game without any benefit to us"⁴²⁶.

On September 28, Romanian Prime Minister Averescu, in a telegram to Filality, confirmed Bucharest's unwavering position on Bessarabia and reminded him that the issue of Romanian values remains "a requirement of the highest importance." Nevertheless, the Romanian delegation was required "not to speed up events, but to drag them out depending on the circumstances"⁴²⁷. On October 3, Averescu reminded Filality that, with regard to "Bessarabia, a wording should be found that allows discussing all issues arising from the actual state of affairs that developed during the events of the war," and "the issue of offsets cannot be excluded from the program. On the contrary, it should be one of the main points of clarification... Under all circumstances, our tactics should be to gain time - we must be accommodating in terms of form and very careful in regard to substance .

On October 3, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR sent a note to Romania, in which they noted that the Romanian government did not agree to expel from the country the representatives of the UNR government indicated in the Soviet note of August 13, and cited new facts of the activity of Petliura agents on the territory of Bessarabia and assistance to them from the Romanian troops . An earlier proposal on the possibility of the Soviet troops pursuing bandits on the territory of Bessarabia took into account a similar agreement between Romania and Bulgaria. In any case, the preservation of the Petliurist organizations in Bessarabia retains the relevance of such a possibility. The development of the negotiations in Warsaw, where the Soviet governments are ready to eliminate "all existing misunderstandings", will depend on the actions of Romania aimed at stopping the "organization of hostile

actions against the Soviet republics"⁴²⁹. On October 5, instructing Filality, Averescu pointed out that "of all possible Russian governments, the Soviet government is the one with which we can negotiate in the most favorable way for us on the issue of Bessarabia - a really controversial point between Romania and Russia. The consent of this government to recognize the actual state of affairs may in the future, if everything changes in Russia, be a powerful lever. Therefore, it is necessary to make every effort to achieve this." Of course, the question of Romanian values "should not fall out of the program, because without it the negotiations will lose all interest for us"⁴³⁰. On the same day, at a regular meeting of the Soviet-Romanian conference, Filality announced the declaration of the Romanian government: "The Romanian government does not allow in any case and in any form to discuss the legality or final nature of the reunification of Bessarabia with Romania. However, it goes without saying that if the Republic of Soviets wished to conclude an agreement with the Government of Rumania regarding the consequences of this reunification, we could take this path. However, since the Republic of Soviets proposed to us to include in the program the question of navigation along

Dniester, which point we agreed to accept as a subject of discussion, we thereby raised a number of issues arising from the accession of Bessarabia to Romania. The Romanian delegation once again recalled that the issue of Romanian values "is one of the main demands of the Romanian government"⁴³¹.

On the evening of October 6, Karahan spoke privately with Filality again and suggested to him that, as a concession, Romania should take upon itself the obligation "in the event of a war declared to Soviet Russia by another state ... to maintain neutrality on a mutual basis"⁴³². For his part, Chicherin on October 10 asked Karakhan: "Did you indicate to Filality that there was a war with Romania and everything transferred to us is booty? Did they point out that the self-determination of Bessarabia was a comedy, even Senator Alexander protested? Have they pointed out that until we recognize Bessarabia as Romania, its possession is unstable, because we can take it away at any moment, and in Bessarabia now there is already an almost complete uprising even of Moldavians"⁴³³. On the same day, the Romanian delegation was again instructed to play for time⁴³⁴. On October 11, Filality asked Bucharest for instructions on readiness to recognize the Ukrainian SSR as one of the contracting parties and said that the Soviet delegation retained the right to bargain over the recognition of Bessarabia as part of Romania⁴³⁵. On October

17, Romanian Foreign Minister Ionescu informed Filality that he "never believed that our valuables would be returned to us, just as I knew that the Soviet government had no other goal than to resume diplomatic relations with Romania, to poison our country with a revolutionary propaganda, hiding behind the shield of diplomatic immunity. The minister believed that the Bessarabian issue should not be transferred to the area of Russian internal problems, it should always remain an international issue, and therefore it was decided, "whatever the consequences, not to enter into a discussion of the issue of Bessarabia as a program item to be resolved by the two governments." Ionescu approved the position expressed at the conference, which boiled down to discussing the issue of Romanian values until the restoration of diplomatic and economic relations. Bucharest also rejected the offer of a guarantee of neutrality in the event of an attack on Soviet Russia by a third state. The minister pointed out that in a possible agreement, "words about a 'peace treaty' or 'cessation of the state of war' should be carefully avoided. We stand most resolutely on the fact that we are not in a state of war and, therefore, do not have the task of concluding a peace treaty. In response to Karakhan's reports on the progress of the discussions in Warsaw, Moscow on October 21 decided to "insist on the participation

of Ukraine" and "apply mutual settlement of claims either in the form of raising questions about both Bessarabia and settlements at the conference, or by eliminating both". In the case of "the refusal of the Romanians to mutually repay their claims, do not stop at the break"⁴³⁷. Thus, as expected, the parties remained unanimous on the issue of Bessarabia. On October 25, the Soviet delegation reiterated that "Romania has Bessarabia under the right of military force and that there are no legal titles on the side of Romania in this matter. The only act capable of legalizing and formalizing the current actual situation of Bessarabia could [could] be an act emanating only from Russia." Accordingly, the conference was adjourned for an indefinite period.

On November 11, Moscow again asked Bucharest to confirm the fact that Makhno was on Romanian territory in order to send material substantiating the request for his extradition to the Soviet authorities. The Romanian side was again reminded that "until Russia and Ukraine recognize the secession of Bessarabia and its annexation by Romania, all questions relating to it" will be of interest to them. "Neither the decision, moreover the controversial one, of the Moldovan nationalist society, nor the decisions of the powers to which Russia and Ukraine are by no means subordinate, can replace for them their own decision and the expression of their own will." It is the future conference that could comprehensively consider the issue of Bessarabia and the decisions of Sfatul Tsarii. Contrary to the statement of the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the agreement of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR to discuss the issue of navigation on the Dniester is not a recognition of the fact that Bessarabia was annexed to Romania on their part. On the contrary, in a number of declarations, Moscow and Kiev have repeatedly stated that "the task of the conference was not to draw a border between the two countries, but only to draw a demarcation line, taking into account the actual occupation of Bessarabia by the Romanian troops. Only an agreement between Romania, on the one hand, and Russia and Ukraine, on the other, will be able to change our point of view on this subject." Romania was reminded that it had violated the agreement of March 9, 1918, and that the Petliura detachments now on its territory were preparing new attacks on the territory of the Ukrainian SSR⁴³⁹.

On November 16, Ionescu sent a reply telegram to Moscow stating that "the royal government will in no way, either directly or indirectly, accept claims" regarding Bessarabia "neither from the present Russian government, nor from its successors, if any; besides, these questions concern only Russia. What you call Bessarabia, i.e. Romania between the Prut and the Dniester is an integral part of the Romanian kingdom. Bessarabia, which formed an independent state, reunited with Romania, and this reunification cannot be a subject of discussion for anyone. The sovereign right of Romania does not follow from the agreement concluded in Paris on October 28, 1920 ... but is the result of an act of reunification carried out by the representatives of Bessarabia, an act final and not in need of any other confirmation. The four powers only recognized the sovereignty of Romania, since they had the right to consolidate, from the point of view of international law, the situation that had developed in Europe as a result of the war. From the point

From Bucharest's point of view, the discussion of the issue of navigation on the Dnieper with the participation of Romania serves as an acknowledgment of the fact that she has the right to decide these issues, which are usually decided by riparian states in the case of border rivers⁴⁴⁰.

Raid on Tiraspol

Incidents on the Dniester continued. So, according to the summary of the headquarters of the VUCHK troops dated November 25, "On November 17, the 185th battalion [...] in the village. Rogi (6 versts north of Dubossary) a sentry noticed a boat crossing to our side with 2 unknown persons. At the time of the discovery of the boat and the entry of the unknown to our shore, the sentry was 5 versts east of the crossing. 7 shots fired by unknown persons due to range and bushes did not reach the target. Investigation in these places did not give any result. 186th battalion: November 11 at 15 o'clock in the area of vil. Tsybudna (4 versts northwest of Yagorlyk), our sentry was fired upon from the side of the Rum cavalrymen with several shots. There was no answer from our side... At the site of the 2nd company, our mounted patrol on November 12 at 14 o'clock in the area of vil. Sorzen was fired from the rum side"⁴⁴¹.

In the intelligence reports of the 51st Rifle Division, stationed on the left bank of the Dniester, dated November 19, it was noted that "3-4 days ago, allegedly ataman Gulyai-Gulenko went to Zabolotny in the Birzulsky district," and "according to the gubchek, on November 19 or 20 the command intends to transport unknown units from the territory of Romania in the Tiraspol-Dubossary region and, as such, unite with the Gulyai-Gulenko detachment ... then, by joint actions, seize Odessa and raise an uprising in the latter. The Bendery group of Petliurists must cross at three points: 1) Kitskany (Tiraspol region); 2) the village of Parkany; 3) Sukleya (5 versts south of Tiraspol). The said points allegedly have vehicles for approximately 300 people each. A crossing of 200 people is planned against Dubossary"⁴⁴².

The evening operational report of the headquarters of the KhVO No. 04821 / op dated November 19, 1921 reported that "according to the report of the brigade commander of the 28th border at dawn on November 19, a gang of 150 bayonets under the command of Pshennik crossed the border in the Parkany region (8 miles west of Tiraspol) and, pushing back the units The 184th border battalion, together with the rebellious population of the Ternovka-Parkany region, occupied the latter, cutting out the communists. At 9 o'clock. On November 19, the gang occupied the western suburbs of the mountains. Tiraspol, from where, after a short battle with units of the 2nd Battalion of the 451st Regiment, the gang was driven back to the west, having lost dead, wounded and prisoners, including the last two officers. The battalion of the 451st regiment, together with the Tiraspol garrison, continuing the pursuit of the gang, at 14:00. occupied Parkany-Ternovka, the gang, having dispersed, left in a northerly direction. During the battle with the gang, the battalion commander of the 2nd - 451st regiment was killed. Parts of the 184th border battalion, concentrated in Tiraspol, were again deployed along the border of their sector, the 2nd battalion of the 451st regiment - Parkany. The maneuver group of the 151st brigade, consisting of the 451st and 453rd regiments and teams of foot scouts of the division, serving a camp in the Cherny Kut-Isaev area (2-7 miles south of Chernovo), was ordered to transfer: the 453rd regiment and teams of foot scouts 151st brigade - Petroverovka area, 451st regiment - Tsebrikovo (30 miles northeast of Tiraspol), from where to conduct enhanced reconnaissance in the general direction to Tiraspol, having allocated at least 3 strong detachments for this purpose. Kombrig 152 - a maneuverable group consisting of the 152nd brigade and cavalry regiment 51, maintaining continuous communication with the 186th border battalion, headquarters 71 of the 24th division and headquarters 153 to be in combat readiness "⁴⁴³.

According to the evening operational report of the HVO headquarters No. 04283 / op dated November 20: "According to the report of the regiment commander 451, on the evening of November 19, the Pshennik gang crossed back to the right bank of the Dniester in boats served by the Rumsoldiers (the place of the crossing was not indicated). According to additional information received, as a result of the battle near Tiraspol and Parkana, 15 Petliurists and 180 rebels were taken prisoner"⁴⁴⁴. The operational report of the HVO headquarters dated November 23 reported that "it is calm in the sector of the 28th border brigade. According to additional information, Pshennik's gang crossed to the Rum side on November 19 in the Ternovka region (8 versts west of Tiraspol); the crossing

was made in boats brought by the Rumanian soldiers"⁴⁴⁵. The reconnaissance report of the 51st Rifle Division on November 21 reported that "a gang of Petliurists numbering 150 people with 1 Colt machine gun at 5 o'clock on November 19 against the village of Bychek (south of the Plosky farm) crossed to our side partly on boats, partly ford. The sentries, noticing the crossing, opened fire, retreating to the headquarters of the troops of the post in the village of Bychek. On alarm, the platoon scattered into a chain, and a battle ensued with the bandits, but due to the numerical superiority of the latter, the border riflemen began to retreat in the direction of Tokmogzey (5 miles northwest of Tiraspol), losing 2 killed and 3 wounded. The gang that crossed was divided into two groups: one of them moved to the village of Parkany, the other in the direction of Tokmogzey, but, met by the approaching units of the 185th battalion, as a result of the battle, was partly thrown back to the room side, and part went after the first group to Parkany. With the approach of gangs to Parkany from the room side opposite the indicated village, a new gang of 60-70 people begins to cross. At the same time, an uprising of peasants rises in Parkany, who attacked the headquarters of the 18th cavalry squadron, the communications platoon and the economic command, captured 2 Maxim machine guns and 1 Shosh. Under pressure from bandits and peasant rebels, a platoon of the 1st company of the 184th battalion withdrew and took up a position east of Parkana, where another platoon joined it, a firefight ensued. As a result, the bandits pushed the platoons back to Tiraspol, occupying the outskirts of Tiraspol, Fortress Sloboda. The gangs were thrown back by the Tiraspol garrison units put in order, and by 2 p.m.

also his machine gun. By 10 p.m., the border guards were restored, and some of the bandits crossed over to Bessarabia on the boats supplied by the Rumsoldiers. The national composition of the gang is Ukrainians and a small part of the Poles, there was a national Ukrainian banner and proclamations in German. Losses on our side are being clarified, the squadron commander 18 and about 20 cavalymen were killed and the commander squadron and about 10 cavalymen were wounded.

On November 21, 1921, the head of the field headquarters of the VUCHK troops, Evdokimov, and the special commissioner for active gangs, Gofitsky, sent an emergency operational report to Moscow, Kiev and Kharkov, in which it was reported that "according to the reports of the OGChK and headquarters 28, received on November 21 at 15 o'clock (by courier) On November 19, in the evening, in the area between Varnitsa and Gura-Bikului, a detachment of 150 people crossed under the command of Pshennik, led by Emelyanov, Baturin, Deduchenko, Zhelobaev and Colonel Pukalov. After the crossing, they broke up in groups: Baturin went to Ploskoye to raise an uprising, Yemelyanov, Deduchenko, Zhelobaev, Pshennik and Pukalov to Parkany, where they raised an uprising and began to advance on Tiraspol. The attack is repulsed. According to the information received, Yemelyanov was wounded. The gang mainly counts on the uprising. Urgent reinforcements are needed in case all bandits unite. They have few weapons. Romanians contributed to the crossing. The possibility of crossing reinforcements from the roombank today is allowed. According to additional undercover information and testimonies of the captured Petliura scouts, the first group will be followed by a landing of over 1,200 bandits. According to the latest information, Gulyai-Gulenko with a detachment, having landed in the Vadreshkovo region, makes his way to the Olgopolis region to connect with Zabolotny's gang and cut off Birzulsky district from Odessa. Along the line of the check, emergency measures were taken to widely cover the movement of the enemy of the cordon on the room side, as well as in the cordon zone.

On the evening of November 22, the operational report of the headquarters of the troops of the VUCHK reported that, "according to the information of the Odessa gubchek, based on the report of headquarters 1, in the area between the s.s. Varnitsa-Guta Bakului (Romania) 15-20 versts north-west of Tiraspol, a detachment of 150 people under the command of General Pshennik crossed (obviously, one of the detachments of Gulyai-Gulenko). After the crossing, the detachment broke up into several groups: one led by Baturin left in the direction of Ploskoye, 10 versts north of Tiraspol, to raise an uprising. The second, headed by Pshennik, Emelyanov, Dudushenko, Zhelovaev and Pukalov - with. Kalkany 3 versts west of Tiraspol. The attack was repulsed. Emelyanov, according to information, was wounded. According to the captured Petliura scouts, the first group will be followed by the landing of a detachment of more than 1,200 people. According to additional information, Gulyai-Gulenko himself allegedly landed in the Vadrashkov region 60 versts southwest of Olgopol, making his way to the Olgopol region to connect with Zabolotny's gang, having the main task of cutting off Birzulsky district from Odessa. Information is being verified.

According to operational information report No. 195 dated November 23, "the gang that raided Tiraspol on November 19 crossed over from the room side in the area of the village. Bychka (18 versts east of Ploskoye) under the command of Petliura's colonel Pshennik, his assistants Khorunzhago and Paraik with the active participation of Tsukalago, Emelyanov, Nevitsky, Ivashchenko, Baturin, Zhelobaev and others. from the headquarters of the 3rd Rumkorpus Statulesco and Marlari, who facilitated the crossing and promised to give weapons. First, 34 people crossed, armed with rifles, revolvers and grenades, under the command of Colonel Sharapko. The crossing was also facilitated by the foreman with. Bychka Lantsev (former commandant of the city of Tiraspol). The second group of bandits under the command of Baturin, numbering 30 people, went to Ploskoe in order to raise an uprising, which they succeeded, and the rest moved to Varnitsa (18 miles northeast of Tiraspol), where they captured 3 machine guns, killed 13 Red Army soldiers and moved to Tiraspol, from where were knocked out, and the 3 machine guns taken were also repulsed, and the gangs scattered around the adjacent villages in order to cross back to Romania. The Romanians took the bandits back and opened fire on our units in order to give the rest of the bandits the opportunity to cross. During the crossing, many bandits drowned in the Dniester. During the battle, proclamations in German addressed to the German colonists signed by Petlyura, Gulyai-Gulenko and Poplavsky, as well as two national Ukrainian flags, were captured. From the interrogation of the arrested, it turned out that in the Akkerman area against Mayaka, Gulyai-Gulenko, led by 27 Cossacks, was going to cross over to our side, counting on the assistance of local peasants and intending to move to Birzula. New details of the raid on Tiraspol are contained in the report of the HVO headquarters on November 25: "According to additional information, the Pshennik gang crossed to our side in the region of 4 versts north of Parkana, partly in boats, partly ford. After a short battle with a

platoon of the 184th frontier battalion, which retreated to Tiraspol due to its small number, the gang, divided into two groups, one headed for Parkany, the other for Tiraspol, on the way to which it was met and driven back by parts of the 1st company. Part of this group went back to Romania, the other part joined the first group. With the approach of the first group to Parkany, another gang of 60-70 people began to cross from the room side, and at the same time an uprising was raised by the bandits in Parkany. From Parkan, the gang, pushing back parts of the 184th battalion, headed for Tiraspol. Met at Tiraspol by parts of the garrison, the gang was repulsed and went to Parkany. During the retreat, the bandits abandoned all the machine guns captured from the 184th frontier battalion, and 1 machine gun taken out by the gang from Romania. The return departure of the gang across the Dniester was carried out in the Ternovka region on boats supplied by the Romanian soldiers. The national composition of the gang is Ukrainian-Petliurists and a small part of the Poles. The gang crossed over with the national Ukrainian

banner and proclamations in German"450 .

Under these conditions, on November 19, a resolution of the STO was adopted, according to which the border troops of the Cheka were replaced at the border by field troops of the Red Army⁴⁵¹. Only almost a year later, on September 27, 1922, by a new resolution of the STO, the protection of the border was transferred to the jurisdiction of the GPU, within which a separate border corps was created⁴⁵². On November 24, 1921, the Chairman of the Military Council of Ukraine and Assistant Commander of all the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Crimea sent the RVS KVO the following order: "The crossing of the Petliurists in the Tiraspol region is of great importance in the field of international relations, therefore the Military Council invites you to urgently collect and submit the following intelligence information : 1) the exact name of the military units to which the gangs that crossed from the Rum side near Tiraspol belong; 2) about the assistance rendered by the Romanian frontier units in the crossing of bands to our territory and return; 3) in what way the gang was equipped on Romanian territory and what were its intentions; 4) the names of the officers taken prisoner and their testimonies"⁴⁵³ .

According to the reconnaissance report of the 51st Rifle Division of November 29, according to interviews of prisoners and arrested people, it was revealed that the day before the crossing, Pshennik's gang received from Chisinau, with the assistance of the 3rd Romanian Corps, 16 rifles and 15 cartridges for each. Weapons were issued on the shore just before the crossing. Since there were few weapons, the commander of the 7th border company, Captain Stanesko, issued 16 more grenades with his authority. The rest of the gang members were told that 650 rifles and 15 machine guns were waiting for them in Parkany. The crossing took almost 2 hours on 1 boat for 7 people. The commander of the 7th border company and soldiers of the Romanian border guards were present at the crossing. They did all this allegedly for money, without any official order. The Ministry of War demanded that the gang be removed from Bendery to the camps, but the headquarters of the 3rd Corps used the gang for their own purposes. After leaving Tiraspol, the gang split into two groups. One, headed by Dudichenko, Pukalov and Zhelabaev, went to the Bychek farm and on the afternoon of November 19 returned to the room side. The second group, led by Pshennik and Emelyanov, crossed at the bridge in Parkany. Part of the bandits scattered around the farms and the city⁴⁵⁴ . To

investigate the case of the gang raid on the Tiraspol district, a commission was created under the chairmanship of Bogdanov, which, having considered the materials submitted by the Odessa Provincial Cheka, the border troops, units of the Red Army and the Tiraspol garrison, on December 3, 1921, drew up a conclusion. This document allows a more detailed presentation of the events in the Tiraspol region. On November 18, the controller of the post with. Bychek Yuryev warned the platoon commander of the 1st company of the 185th battalion of the All-Russian Cheka, Burenin, that a crossing from the Romanian coast was expected at night. When it got dark, Yuryev, Burenin and 2-3 other people went ashore and saw an alarm, which someone, apparently, answered from our shore. Somewhat later, on our shore, someone began to beat the board, giving them a signal as if. The shore was carefully examined, but no one and nothing was found. Everyone returned to the cordon. At about 11 p.m., a sentry reported that a boat had been seen on the water. The platoon, raised on alarm, went to the shore. There they saw 10-15 people who landed on the shore. A shootout began. Having fired the cartridges, the platoon returned to the cordon for ammunition. Coming out a second time to the coast, the platoon heard the command: "The first company to the right, march into the chain," after which the platoon commander gave the order to move away from the coast over the hillock beyond the village, where the Red Army stood for 2 hours.

Suddenly, in front of them, in the darkness, Baklanov, the brother of the chairman of the local Selrevkom, outlined a cart, on which several people were sitting. One of them called out to the Red Army: "Stop, what a pass." One of the Red Army men answered: "The trigger." Then those sitting on the cart opened fire and moved aside. The border platoon, divided into two groups, also withdrew from Bychk to Malaeshty and Krasnogorka. Later, both groups joined in Krasnogorka, and in the morning the 1st company of the 185th battalion arrived there from Tokmadzeya, notified by Yuryev. Both units returned to Bychek, but it turned out that the bandits had left for Parkany at night. However, instead of pursuing the gang, as the squadron commander Petrukhin suggested, the company commander ordered the wounded to be gathered and sent to Tokmadzeya, where he himself had gone.

In addition to the platoon of the 1st company of the 185th battalion, there were 4 cavalymen from the 17th cavalry squadron in Bychka, who lived separately in an apartment. The commander of the border platoon did not know exactly where they lived, and in the confusion of the battle no one remembered them. As a result, 2 cavalymen were killed, 1 wounded, one of the two border guards who remained in the cordon due to lack of shoes was also killed (the other escaped by hiding behind the stove). The gang was joined by a local resident L. Dontsov, who advised Baklanov, chairman of the Selrevkom, to take refuge in his hut, since "they are having an uprising," but "today I will save you, and tomorrow you will save me." Baklanov did just that. In the village of local residents, the bandits did not touch anyone, limiting themselves to a search.

According to local residents, about half of the bandits were armed, and they split into two groups. One went to Ploskoye, where it seemed to have scattered, since nothing more is known about it. Another group moved to Parkany. There was a garrison consisting of units of the 184th battalion and a platoon of the 18th cavalry squadron (up to 50 people in total with 25 rifles and 3 machine guns), whose soldiers lived in apartments where weapons were also located. Shooting in the village Bychek, if she was heard, was perceived as a training one, especially since on November 18 they were warned about the teachings of Burenin. As a result, the Red Army soldiers were taken by surprise and 20 of them were killed. Having captured Parkany and armed with captured weapons, the bandits organized a peasant gathering, which called for an uprising and a campaign against Tiraspol. Some of the peasants willingly joined the bandits, while others were forced to submit.

They learned about these events in Tiraspol only at about 9 o'clock in the morning from the Red Army soldiers of the 451st Infantry Regiment who had fled to the city. There were 464 bayonets, 70 sabers with 11 machine guns in the city, while the gang was estimated at 150-200 people. However, the presence in Tiraspol of several headquarters with their own formations led to the fact that there was no single command. The head of the garrison, Zabaluev, left on November 17 to carry out a special task, his deputy did not enjoy confidence. Raised on alert, the 2nd battalion of the 451st regiment, consisting of 45 people, took up defense and, with skillful and energetic actions, in fact, stopped the advance of the gang. However, the death of the battalion commander led to confusion and the withdrawal of the battalion to the city. The mobilization of the 7th company of the Communist Regiment of local communists was delayed, and other detachments acted without any coordination. Instead of organizing the defense and defeating the gang, the head of the special department Yuzhny constantly contacted the Odessa Provincial Cheka, informing about the situation and asking for instructions. As the commission found out, as early as November 16, Yuzhny received information from an agent about an impending raid by the Petliura gang, which was preparing a crossing in Kitskany, Parkany, and Bychka. Not fully trusting this information, Yuzhny reported it to Odessa and warned the local command, which reinforced the border guards with 60 Red Army soldiers. However, the units in Bychka and Parkany were not aware of this information, they were simply ordered to increase their vigilance. Naturally, no one took this as a serious warning. During the battles in Tiraspol and Yuzhny's visits to the telegraph, the VChK company, raised on alarm, remained inactive, waiting for his order.

After clashes on the outskirts of the city, the Soviet units withdrew to the headquarters of the garrison, from where they again launched an offensive. A detachment under the command of Tyulpanov soon occupied the Tiraspol fortress, where he took the first prisoners. The battalion of the 451st regiment knocked out the bandits from the Zhytomyr barracks. The gang began to retreat to Parkany, which were also occupied by Soviet units around 14:00. Finally defeated, the bandits, trying to cross back across the Dniester, undressed to make it easier to swim, and threw weapons and clothes on the shore. Most of them drowned in the river, some swam to the Romanian shore, and one was given a rope from the bridge by the Romanians.

The Soviet authorities carried out repressions against those who supported the bandits and personally participated in the hostilities. Thus, 36 people were shot in Tiraspol, 10 in Parkany, and 3 in Bychka. Their property was confiscated, and their families will be evicted from the county. Less involved in the events of 25-30 people were imprisoned in a concentration camp. In addition, arrests were made of those suspected of links with gangs or foreign organizations.

"It is clear from this case that if the raid was not directly organized by the Romanian authorities, then it, apparently, took place with the obvious connivance of our Transnistrian neighbors. From the documents taken from the prisoners, and partly abandoned by the raiders, it follows that many of them served in the 3rd Romanian army corps as agents, informers, etc." Further study of documents and interviews of prisoners will make it possible to more accurately judge the degree of Romania's participation in the events of November 19th.

In general, the commission's recommendations boiled down to restoring order in the border and military units, providing them with everything necessary and bringing their numbers up to staffing standards. In addition, the commission recommended bringing to trial those commanders and chiefs who failed to organize actions to repel the gang, as well as 6 people from the 2nd Communist Regiment for desertion⁴⁵⁵. Meanwhile, on November

29, the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR sent a note to Bucharest stating that, although the Romanian side constantly denied the presence of agents of the UNR government in Bessarabia and the preparation of "bandit raids on Ukraine", new raids from across the Dniester took place. "On November 19, at dawn, a gang of 150 bayonets that left Bendery pushed back the Soviet border post, occupied the villages of Parkany and Ternovka, massacred peasants there who were suspected of belonging to the Communist Party, and killed 13 Red Army soldiers. By 9 o'clock the gang reached the western suburbs of Tiraspol. At the same time, another gang of smaller numbers crossed the Dniester near the town of Gura-Bikului, north of Bender, and headed for the village. Flat, after the occupation of which she also moved to Tiraspol in a northwestern direction. After a short battle with the Tiraspol garrison, the gang was driven back, having suffered losses in killed, wounded and prisoners; among the last two officers. Ataman Pshennik commanded the raid, among his close associates in the gang were Yemelyanov, Dudichenko, Baturin and Colonel Pugalov. The Romanian captains Satulescu and Mardalescu (Mardariy) from the headquarters of the 3rd corps took an active part in organizing the supply and crossing the gang.

"At the time of the crossing, the Romanian artillery opened fire on our border posts from the Bessarabian coast, and when the defeated and scattered bands, on the evening of 19, descended to the Dniester, boats were sent from the opposite side by the Romanian soldiers towards them." There is evidence that on the morning of November 18, in the Dubossary region, a gang under the command of Gulyai-Gulenko himself tried to penetrate into Ukraine, and Frolov's gang of 200 people is concentrated in the Akkerman region. In addition, after the defeat of the Tyutyunnik gang, documents were seized that testify to the contacts of the Petliura representatives in Bessarabia with the headquarters of the 4th Romanian corps. The Soviet governments protested and declared the responsibility of the Romanian government for these events⁴⁵⁶. In a reply telegram dated December 4, Ionescu promised to investigate this incident, but believed that it was unlikely that "the gang you are talking about formed on our territory." Nevertheless, he again repeated the already traditional phrase about Romania's lack of aggressive intentions towards Russia⁴⁵⁷.

On December 28, 1921, the IX All-Russian Congress of Soviets, on the initiative of Lenin, adopted the "Declaration on

international position of the RSFSR", which noted that, despite repeated proposals to enter into "negotiations on all controversial issues, not excluding the question of Bessarabia", Romania evades negotiations and contributes to the formation and arming of Petliura gangs on its territory. Under these conditions, the congress warned "the governments of neighboring states that if they continue to encroach or support encroachments on the integrity of Soviet territory and on the security of the Soviet republics," they will force them to an adequate "response, which could be fatal for the attacker and his accomplices"⁴⁵⁸. It is clear that the command of the Red Army continued to develop plans in case of war.

By his directive No. 58198 / A / ss of February 4, 1922, the commander of all the armed forces of Ukraine and Crimea, Frunze, demanded that the headquarters of the KVO and KhVO develop plans in case of war with Poland and Romania, supporting the White Guard formations. On February 25, the HVO headquarters presented a plan for the regrouping and concentration of troops of the 10th Army in case Poland and Romania acted together with the White Guard formations.

This document indicated that the White Guard formations located in the Balkans and in Romania were possible opponents. It was believed that Romania alone would not fight, but together with Poland, her performance is quite likely. The forces of a potential enemy were estimated as follows. The Whites had 65 thousand people, the Romanian army has 183,270 bayonets, 14,130 sabers, 6,335 machine guns, 1,011 guns, of which 78,270 bayonets, 4,250 sabers, 3,562 machine guns, 528 guns fall on the Eastern Front. It was believed that Romania was able to call up to 1,940 thousand people, and the support from the Little Entente would allow her to concentrate her main forces in the east.

"When Poland comes out together with Romania, the main task of the Red Army is to inflict a decisive defeat on the Polish army, as the most powerful, while against Romania - expectant actions, as remote from the main objects of action." The 8th and 9th armies of the Southwestern Front were deployed on the Soviet-Polish border. For actions against Romania, the 10th Army was created, the control of which was allocated from the HVO headquarters. The army included the 3rd, 51st, arriving 53rd rifle divisions and the secondary 136th, 137th rifle brigades. The 30th and 15th rifle divisions from the KhVO were transferred to the 8th Army, and the 2nd and 34th rifle divisions deployed in Kiev and Lozova, respectively, were transferred to the reserve of the Southwestern Front. According to this plan, the troops of the 10th Army

received the task of "providing the left flank of the 8th Army, covering it from attacks from Balti-Botosani in the direction of Kremenchug, actively defending the line of the river. Dniester and defend the Black Sea coast from the Dniester estuary to the Kerch Strait inclusive. The army troops deployed as follows: the 51st division on the lower Dniester and from the Dniester to the Tiligul estuary; 3rd division in the Crimea, in the area of Krivoy Rog, Kherson, Nikolaev; 53rd division in the area of Olviopol, Chemirpol, Golovenevsk; 136th brigade in the area of Art. Fedorovka, s. Vasilievka, and the 137th brigade in the Voznesensk area. Field Directorate of the 10th Army - at st. Znamenska. In the event of a war with Poland alone, the 10th Army (3rd, 51st Rifle Divisions, 136th, 137th Rifle Brigades) will passively defend the Dniester line and the coast. On the 18th day of mobilization, the command of the 11th army is allocated from the command of the North Caucasus Military District, which must subjugate the 3rd division and the 136th brigade to defend the coast from Ochakov to Kerch. If the attack is undertaken only by the White Guard formations, then the available units must repel it, and the command of the 10th Army is created only when the situation becomes more complicated⁴⁵⁹. In an effort to prevent a new

aggravation of the situation on the western borders, on March 18, the RVSR approved the following proposal by the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army on March 18, No. in particular, the desire to repulse the bandits on their own and punish their organizers, i.e. Romanian and Polish authorities, the RVSR considers it necessary to draw the attention of the NKID to this in order to warn the Romanian and Polish authorities in one way or another that the Petliura and Savinkov gangs from Romania and Poland will inevitably provoke a uniform rebuff from the border population. On the part of the Military Department there can be a full guarantee that if our borders remain inviolable, no gangs from our side will be allowed into the territory of Poland and Romania. In the case of repeated bandit raids on our territory, the local military authorities declare that it is completely impossible for them to take responsibility for protecting the inviolability of the Romanian and Polish borders, not to mention the fact that too decisive policy on our part in this regard will not be understood at all. the local population . "

However, the general situation on the western border of the Soviet republics in 1922 was much calmer than the year before. Under these conditions, the operational plans of the Red Army outlined above remained only on paper.

Normalization on the Dniester and the Conference in

Vienna While preparing for the international economic conference in Genoa, Romania refused the Soviet proposal to coordinate the interests of the parties in order to support each other at the conference. On the contrary, Bucharest regarded the forthcoming conference as another opportunity to internationalize its financial demands on the RSFSR. For its part, Moscow also counted the losses caused by the actions of Romania

in 1916–1920 Already on January 22, 1922, according to incomplete data, Romania's debt was estimated at 1,005,501,601 rubles. 61 k. in gold (at the prices of 1916–1918)⁴⁶¹. The general claims of Moscow to Bucharest were expressed in the figure of 1,352,355,634 rubles in gold⁴⁶². For its part, Romania believed that Russia owed it 15 billion lei, while the Romanians estimated their own debt at 873 million lei⁴⁶³. During the Genoa Conference (April 10 - May 19, 1922), Romania declared that the RSFSR should return to it valuables totaling 7.9 billion francs⁴⁶⁴. On May 6, Chicherin informed the press that "the demand to return Romanian gold without prior resolution of existing disputes between Romania and Russia, such as the issue of Bessarabia, is also unacceptable"⁴⁶⁵ .

On May 17 in Genoa, Chicherin declared that Soviet Russia was ready to sign a general non-aggression pact, but respect for the existing territorial status quo "is by no means tantamount for Russia to recognition of the current territorial status quo, and in particular, recognition of the current occupation of Bessarabia by Romania"⁴⁶⁶. On the same day, the Romanian delegation declared its readiness to take on the obligation of non-aggression against Russia on the basis of maintaining the territorial status quo⁴⁶⁷. On July 7, the Ukrainian SSR again demanded that Romania stop supporting the Petliura formations, their disarmament and dissolution⁴⁶⁸. On July 19, in a conversation with Litvinov in The Hague, Diamandi announced Bucharest's readiness to resume negotiations with Moscow both on the question of Bessarabia and on the question of Romanian values. In the question of Bessarabia, we should talk about the settlement of the border so that Bessarabia remains with Rumania. Litvinov hinted that the best solution to the issue of financial claims of the parties could be a mutual waiver of them. In addition, he invited Romania to take part in the disarmament conference in Moscow, to which Poland and the Baltic countries were invited as early as June 12. ⁴⁶⁹ On August 15, the Romanian side notified the RSFSR that it took note of the Soviet proposal to participate in the disarmament conference, believes that "the first step towards a disarmament agreement should be the recognition of existing borders"⁴⁷⁰ . On August 28, the Romanian

government reiterated that it was ready to discuss any issues with the RSFSR, but "demands that it be considered established that the current border of Romania is not a subject of discussion"⁴⁷¹. On September 26, Moscow announced that it was also ready to discuss any issues of Soviet-Romanian relations, but would not accept any ultimatums⁴⁷². In the autumn of 1922, the parties twice again indicated their unchanged position⁴⁷³, as a result, Romania did not take part in the Moscow Conference on Disarmament, instructing Poland to represent its interests. On December 19, 1922, in Lausanne, Chicherin, in a conversation with the Romanian ambassador in Paris, Diamandi, who assured him of Romania's peaceful intentions, made the following proposal as a possible compromise: "recognition of Bessarabia in exchange for the values and jewels of the Crown, the complete elimination of financial claims" and "settlement of other issues"⁴⁷⁴. This sounding did not have any concrete consequences.

As early as May 12, 1922, the tasks of Soviet active intelligence were clarified: "1. Continue further preparatory work. Take all measures so that the active intelligence apparatus does not decompose. Recognize as one of the tasks of active intelligence to reveal the mood of the local population and, in the case of spontaneous movements, to take over their leadership by agreement with the local party organs. 2. Consider it necessary to significantly strengthen the organizational work of active intelligence on the territory of Romania"⁴⁷⁵. In January 1923, Soviet intelligence received information about the clashes that had taken place on the Hungarian-Romanian border. Based on materials from the Romanian budget discussed in parliament, the Soviet military command estimated the Romanian armed forces for 1923 at 160,884 people⁴⁷⁶. Soviet intelligence managed to obtain information that, according to the Romanian General Staff, in the event of a war with the USSR, Soviet troops would advance from Khotin and Bender to Iasi and Galati. Moreover, the main blow was expected from Bender to Galati and Bucharest. These assessments were generally shared by the French General Staff, which, however, doubted the stability of the Romanian troops and advised Romania to create a fortified line along the river. Prut, so that the Red Army could not break through the Carpathians to Transylvania⁴⁷⁷ .

On May 16, 1923, the USSR informed Romania about new facts of shelling of Soviet military personnel by Romanian soldiers on the Dniester⁴⁷⁸. On June 12, the Romanian side replied that all these incidents were the result of the response of the Romanian troops to shelling from the Soviet bank of the river, and proposed to start negotiations on measures to prevent military incidents on the Dniester⁴⁷⁹. On July 16, Moscow agreed to this proposal⁴⁸⁰ . On August 10, negotiations began in Tiraspol between the Soviet Union and Romania, during which the parties, by tacit agreement, refused to discuss the clashes that took place on the Dniester, and focused on developing measures to prevent them. As the head of the Soviet delegation A. Bobrishev pointed out in his report to Moscow, "the question of investigating the cases that took place on the Dniester during 1921, 1922 and 1923 should be raised only as a last resort, because if on the part of Romania or with the connivance of its government there were very serious cases of violation of the inviolability of our territory, then on our part active work did not stop almost until very recently. At the same time, the Romanian authorities have at their disposal solid data that compromises us, because both individual documents of ours fell into their hands, and there were cases of our agents going over to their side, not counting forced testimony . The negotiations in Tiraspol ended with the signing on November 20

of the "Regulations on measures and means aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts that may arise on the Dniester River"⁴⁸². At the same time, the Soviet

the delegation emphasized that the Dniester was considered by the USSR as a temporary demarcation line. On November 30, 1923, a protocol was signed on the creation of a mixed commission to resolve emerging conflicts on the Dniester and an instruction on its activities. Meanwhile, the idea of restoring trade relations with Romania was being discussed in Moscow. The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) of the USSR feared that "a full and final trade agreement would help secure Bessarabia for Romania, but a temporary and limited trade agreement with a certain proviso that it does not prejudice the issue of border settlement would be useful to us. It will weaken Rumania's ties with Poland and therefore weaken the latter's international position. Accordingly, on September 6, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) decided "to continue the technical work of the first Soviet-Romanian commission in order to open trade relations, but without concluding an agreement that would suggest the idea of ceding Bessarabia"⁴⁸⁴.

On November 10, bilateral negotiations on trade issues began. The Soviet delegation proposed to establish a Soviet consulate in Bucharest, and a Romanian consulate in Moscow. After long consultations, on December 31, the Romanian delegation refused to accept these proposals, referring to the lack of diplomatic relations⁴⁸⁵. During the talks on December 5, Moscow announced its readiness to take part in a conference for the complete settlement of Soviet-Romanian relations, Bucharest was asked to name the time and place of its convocation. On December 21, the Romanian side also agreed to continue negotiations in the second half of January 1924 in Salzburg. As a result of the exchange of notes, the parties agreed that Vienna would be the place of negotiations, and the negotiations themselves would take place in March 1924.⁴⁸⁶ The discussion of the prospects for relations with Romania revealed that the Soviet leadership supported two main options for diplomatic actions. Some were in favor of holding a conference that could be used to declare the interests of the USSR and, possibly, reach some kind of agreement with Bucharest. Others opposed the conference in general, because they believed that "in the Bessarabian issue, time is our best ally", and "on the day when we can speak so loudly that our voice is heard everywhere, like the voice of a great revolutionary state, it will not be difficult for us to will find a solution to the Bessarabian issue.

As a result, on March 3, 1924, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) formulated instructions for the Soviet delegation at the forthcoming conference, according to which "Bessarabia can in no case be ceded to Romania"⁴⁸⁷. Accordingly, in preparation for the Vienna Conference, the Soviet government launched a broad press campaign aimed at exposing the occupation regime in Bessarabia, covering economic and political situation of the population of the region, revealing the essence of the policy of the imperialist circles of the West in relation to Bessarabia. On March 2 and 14, 1924, crowded rallies of natives of Bessarabia took place in Moscow, at which the idea of creating the Moldavian SSR and its reunification with the USSR was voiced, and the mandate of the Soviet delegation at the Vienna Conference, handed over to its head N.N. Krestinsky. The order stated: "... we entrust to you, the representatives of the USSR at the conference in Vienna, the fate of the working people of Bessarabia, we ask you to defend the following demands: 1) the immediate release from prisons of all workers and peasants who fought for the cause of liberation

working people of Bessarabia;

2) immediate cessation of arrests, beatings, executions and persecution of the labor movement; 3) the immediate release of the mobilized Bessarabians from the ranks of the Romanian army; 4) the return of all property taken away by the Romanian bourgeoisie from the borders of Bessarabia, with full compensation; 5) opening the borders of Bessarabia for free entry and exit of citizens, immediately from the beginning of the conference; 6) immediate withdrawal of Romanian troops and full compensation for material and moral sacrifices, incurred by all citizens of Bessarabia during the entire period of occupation; 7) the creation of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic of Bessarabia and its reunification with the USSR. Down with the invaders! Long live the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic!" Meetings of protest against the occupation of Bessarabia and in support of the mandate worked out at the meetings of Bessarabians in Moscow on the Bessarabian issue also took place in Vinnitsa, Yekaterinoslav and other cities of the Soviet Union. ⁴⁸⁸

On March 23, 1924, a grand demonstration of protest against Polish rule in Galicia and Romanian rule in Bessarabia took place in Vienna. It was attended by thousands of Galician and Bessarabian refugees who were in Austria. At the rally, the speakers spoke about the reign of terror in Bessarabia, demanded the evacuation of the Romanian troops from the region and a plebiscite among the population of the region on the issue of its fate. On behalf of those gathered, the delegation handed over to Krestinsky a memorandum, in which, on the basis of documents and testimonies, the horrors of terror in Bessarabia were exposed and demands were put forward for the evacuation of the Romanian troops from Bessarabia, holding a plebiscite, compensating the Bessarabian population for the losses caused to them by the occupiers, and releasing political prisoners from Bessarabian prisons. At a reception of representatives of the foreign press at the USSR embassy in Austria, a delegation elected at a meeting of Bessarabians in Kharkov read out a statement in which the Romanian allegations were exposed that the Bessarabian population had decided to "attach" the region to Romania. The statement emphasized that even the so-called vote in Sfatul Tarii on April 9, 1918, took place in the presence of Romanian soldiers and gendarmes and under the influence of open threats, and the act of the same self-proclaimed body of December 10 was only announced in the presence of deputies without filing

votes for and against. The delegation indicated further that it had in its possession the text of the protest of the representatives of the majority of Sfatul Tarii against this lawlessness. In the statement of the delegation of Bessarabians, the demand was again put forward to grant the population of

Bessarabia the right to self-determination⁴⁸⁹. For its part, Romania, preparing for the Vienna Conference, sought to create the impression that everything was going well in Bessarabia and that there was no Bessarabian issue. In order to cultivate public opinion both within the country and abroad, the Romanian government organized several rallies, which, of course, approved the unification of Bessarabia with Romania (for example, on March 23, 1924, such an event took place in Chisinau). In an effort to strengthen its position at the conference, Romania tried to achieve the ratification of the Paris Protocol on the Bessarabian issue by France, Italy and Japan. Following the wishes of Romania, France ratified the Paris Protocol on March 11, 1924, thereby hoping to support Bucharest in the upcoming negotiations with the USSR in Vienna and to intensify anti-Soviet forces in the West.

It is clear that the Soviet government came out with a strong protest against the ratification by the French Parliament of the Paris Protocol. On March 16, the NKID of the USSR sent a telegram of protest to the French government, which stated: "The decision of the French parliament, adopted on the eve of the negotiations between the Soviet Union and Romania, cannot be regarded otherwise than as the intervention of a third power, which will inevitably prevent the establishment of a lasting peace and will contribute to the extension unsettled state of this part of Europe. The Government of the USSR draws the attention of the French Government to the fact that the latter is in solidarity with the violation of the rights of the population of Bessarabia and the Soviet Union by the occupation of Bessarabia by Romania and is therefore responsible for the losses caused to the Soviet Union by the occupation. The government of the USSR will draw all the necessary conclusions from this."

The Romanian government instructed its delegation that, even before the start of official negotiations, it should obtain from the USSR recognition of the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania⁴⁹¹. Normalization of relations between Romania and the USSR is impossible "without establishing a border between them; the establishment of the border means the recognition of the unification of Bessarabia, which is and should be ours, so that this problem excludes all discussions"⁴⁹². At the meeting of the Romanian Council of Ministers held on March 19, 1924, the last instructions of the delegation departing for Vienna were developed: in the event of the USSR refusing to recognize the accession of Bessarabia to Romania, the conference should be immediately interrupted. The Romanian delegation had the authority only to negotiate, but not to sign any documents. Knowing in general terms about the uncompromising position of Romania, on March 24 Moscow pointed out to Krestinsky: "It is necessary that the word 'plebiscite' be heard at the conference. The Romanians will probably leave as soon as you touch Bessarabia, so one of your first words when you touch it, let it be a 'plebiscite'. Include this word in your very first sentence."

It was in this environment that the Vienna Conference began its work. Before it began, on March 26, the head of the Soviet delegation, Plenipotentiary Representative of the USSR in Germany, Krestinsky, at a meeting with correspondents of foreign newspapers, once again indicated that the USSR intended to resolve all disputes with Romania in a friendly atmosphere and by peaceful means. The official opening of the conference took place at 3:30 pm on March 27, 1924. At a meeting on March 28, the Soviet delegation proposed that territorial, financial, economic, and political and legal issues be included in the conference agenda. The Romanian delegation stated that "the issues to be discussed are in principle those put forward by the delegation of the USSR, and [it] agrees with the latter on the proposed order of discussions." At the same time, the Romanian delegation believed that the USSR was ready to "recognize the Dniester as the border between Russia and Romania."

The Bessarabian question immediately occupied the main place in the work of the Vienna Conference. The declaration announced by Krestinsky stated: "The government of the USSR, and before the formation of the USSR, the governments of the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR never gave their consent to the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania and consider the occupation of Bessarabia in 1918 by the Romanian troops, which continues to this day, as a forcible seizure of this region". Emphasizing that in its policy towards Bessarabia the Soviet government is guided not by any right inherited from Tsarist Russia, but by the principle of the nation's right to self-determination, the Soviet delegation, in order to justly settle the Bessarabia issue, proposed holding a plebiscite in Bessarabia. "The government of the USSR believes that the people of Bessarabia must decide for themselves whether they want to remain part of the USSR, whether they want to secede from the Union and join Romania, or, finally, prefer to exist as an independent sovereign state." At the next meeting on March 31, the Romanian delegation rejected the proposal for a plebiscite, pointing out that the province's belonging to Romania is already a settled issue. In its declaration, the Romanian delegation stated that only on the basis of the recognition by the Soviet side of Bessarabia as an integral part of Romania would it be ready to continue negotiations.

At the meeting of the conference on April 2, the Soviet delegation resolutely rejected the Rumanian claims. In her statement, she pointed out that Romania "captured a part of Soviet territory with an armed hand, has been holding it for six years, has so far evaded any negotiations with the government of the USSR, and now, having finally sent a delegation for negotiations, is actually disrupting these negotiations, setting them as a condition continuation of the preliminary recognition by the allied Soviet government of the legality of the annexation of Bessarabia."

The Soviet delegation suggested that "the Romanian delegation refuse to put any preliminary demands on us and start a joint discussion of the conditions for organizing a plebiscite in Bessarabia. Only in this way will the Romanian government be able to free itself from the accusation that it holds Bessarabia in its hands just as forcibly and just as against the will of the population, as it does with Bukovina, which is mostly populated by Ukrainian peasants.

The reply of the Romanian delegation was that it "finds it necessary to postpone the negotiations and return to Romania"⁴⁹⁴. Romania's refusal to hold a plebiscite in Bessarabia was due not only to the fact that there was, of course, no guarantee of a positive decision for Bucharest by the local population in the event of the withdrawal of Romanian troops, but also to the fact that the Western powers strongly advised not to create a precedent that set most of the borders that emerged from the Versailles system of treaties would be called into question. Thus, by refusing the plebiscite, Romania once again confirmed before the whole world that its power in Bessarabia rests solely on bayonets. In this regard, it is worth noting that the support of the Soviet position at the Vienna Conference⁴⁹⁶ prevailed in the press of Yugoslavia, allied with Romania on the Little Entente .

Summing up the results of the Vienna Conference at a press conference for foreign journalists in Vienna on April 4, 1924, Krestinsky said: "The USSR, putting forward demands for a plebiscite on the Bessarabian issue, wanted to show by this that it was going towards Romania. But if the Rumanian government wants the population of Bessarabia to resolve the question of the form of the state system in the same way as the working people of the Soviet republics did - by convening a congress of Soviets - then the Soviet government will not object to this method of resolving the issue after the abolition of the Romanian occupation. . In a statement by the USSR People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, representatives of the press stated that, despite its failure, the Vienna Conference provided "an opportunity to once again remind the whole world of the existence of a serious territorial issue in the southeast of Europe, which neither the conference of ambassadors, nor the League of Nations, nor parliaments can resolve. great powers, if there is no will of the Soviet republics directly interested in this issue, and also to remind the unfortunate population of Bessarabia that they are not forgotten by their brothers in Ukraine. The Soviet Union did not reconcile itself to the rejection of Bessarabia from it, and until the plebiscite is held, "we will consider Bessarabia an integral part of Ukraine and the Soviet Union"⁴⁹⁸ .

Diplomatic games Meanwhile,

on February 5, 1924, G.I. Kotovsky, S.S. Timov, P.D. Tkachenko and a number of Romanian emigrants-communists turned to the Central Committee of the RCP (b) with a proposal to create a Moldavian Republic, which, in their opinion, could attract the sympathy of the Bessarabian population, exert "a strong ideological influence on the surrounding regions and, given the appropriate international situation, [. . .] to revolutionize the whole situation in the Balkan Peninsula." In response to a request from the Central Committee about the advisability of such a formation, the commander of all the armed forces of Ukraine and the Crimea, Frunze, supported this proposal. The preparation of the organization of the new autonomy was entrusted to the Central Committee of the CP(b)U. On March 7, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U found it expedient to organize the Moldavian Autonomous Republic within the Ukrainian SSR. On March 11, the plenum of the Odessa Provincial Committee of the Communist Party decided to create a Moldavian communist section under the provincial committee. However, Kharkov and Moscow still hesitated. Then, in order to speed up the solution of this issue, on July 25, 1924, Frunze sent a note to the Central Committee of the RCP (b) in which he wrote: population. The city of Tiraspol could be given as an administrative center. Finally, an international moment follows. The creation of even a small Moldavian republic or region in our hands will be a powerful tool in our hands to influence the mood of the worker-peasant masses of Bessarabia in the sense of strengthening hopes for deliverance from the Romanian oppression .

On July 29, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RCP(b) decided "to consider it necessary, primarily for political reasons, to separate the Moldovan population into a special autonomous republic within the Ukrainian SSR and to propose to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine to give appropriate directives to the Ukrainian Soviet bodies"⁵⁰⁰. Accordingly, on August 2, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CP(b)U approved a detailed action plan on this issue. On September 25, the Politburo of the Central Committee indicated that "in the act of creating the Autonomous Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, it should be indicated that its western border is the state border of the USSR" - that is, the Prut and Danube rivers⁵⁰¹ . By the decision of the III session of the All-Ukrainian Central Executive Committee of the VIII convocation on October 12, the Moldavian Autonomous SSR was formed as part of the Ukrainian SSR. In total, the new autonomy covered 11 districts with an area of 8.1 thousand square meters. km and a population of 545.6 thousand people, the city of Balta became its capital (since 1929 it was moved to Tiraspol). The act of the VUTsIK on the formation of the MASSR stated that "the western border of this republic is the state border of the USSR; we consider this border not the Dniester, but the Prut. Let the capitalists temporarily hold Bessarabia in their hands - this is a matter of fact, but not of right. Rights are on our side. On our map, Bessarabia is also circled in red, because Bessarabia must become an inseparable part of the AMSSR"⁵⁰². Pointing to the international significance of the formation of the MASSR, Pravda wrote: "At the gates of Romania, where the most Black-Hundred bourgeoisie in Europe is rampant, the Soviet star has lit up. Its rays will shine far to the West, and it will serve as a guiding star for the entire population of Bessarabia and the proletariat of Rumania."

In Bessarabia, the underground struggle against Romanian domination continued. In all counties of the region there were

circles and cells engaged in the distribution of illegal newspapers, leaflets, appeals, etc. By the end of 1923, the South Bessarabian Underground Revolutionary Committee was created in Tatarbunary, which began preparations for an uprising. On the night of September 11, 1924, in the village of Nikolayevka, there was a clash between rebels and gendarmes, who managed to arrest most of the underground workers and seize materials indicating the presence of a revolutionary underground organization in the south of Bessarabia. The Romanian authorities began to gather troops to the south. On September 14, the rebel leadership decided to hasten the start of the uprising. On the morning of September 16, an uprising began in Tatarbunary and Soviet power was proclaimed. The rebels occupied the villages of Akmagnit, Mikhailovka and Chishmya, where there were clashes with the Romanian gendarmes and troops, but the general uprising in the region, which they expected, did not happen. On September 17–18, Romanian troops defeated the rebels and massacred the population, during which more than 3 thousand people died. These events received a great response in Europe, convincingly showing the falsity of the statements of the Romanian government about the "voluntary" desire of the Bessarabian population to unite with Romania⁵⁰³.

The investigation of the events that took place was carried out not only by the Romanian special services, but also by the structures of the Comintern. As a result, it turned out that the initiators of the uprising were the head of the South Bessarabian Revolutionary Committee A. Klyushnikov (Nenin) and O. Polyakov (Platov), who declared himself the leader of the uprising. Naturally, the Romanian side sought to prove that the uprising was the result of the "intrigues of the Kremlin", but the documents of the ECCI allow us to assert that the uprising was a personal initiative of these underground figures, who to a certain extent misinformed Moscow. Moreover, in an effort to raise an uprising, its leaders in their proclamations declared that they had been promised help to the Red Army, which was an outright lie. Apparently, it was no coincidence that on February 25, 1925, the Soviet leadership decided to abandon the usual forms of "active intelligence" (sabotage, military subversive groups, etc.) and completely restructure the foreign activities

of military intelligence. On March 26, it was decided to create a non-party peasant revolutionary organization in Bessarabia on the basis of the militant organizations of the peasants "under the slogans of liberation from the Romanian oppression, division of the landowners' land and unification with the USSR." At the same time, it was necessary to focus on propaganda and agitation and not allow scattered spontaneous armed uprisings. It was also forbidden to contribute to the arming of the local population⁵⁰⁴. Corresponding measures were also taken by the Comintern. On April 29, 1925, the Bessarabian commission on the national question of the 5th expanded plenum of the ECCI decided that the Communist Party of Romania should make more active use in its work of the fact that "the formation of the Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic, as an autonomous republic within Soviet Ukraine, is an expression of national aspirations of the Moldovan people and a clear example of the resolution of the Moldovan national question. At the same time, it was necessary to get rid of the passivity of the labor movement that exists in Bessarabia, "waiting for liberation ... from the Dniester", and to propagate the slogans of the right of every people to self-determination, the liberation of Bessarabia from the Romanian occupation and its unification with the Moldavian ASSR⁵⁰⁵. Accordingly, the manifesto of the Union of Revolutionary Peasants of Bessarabia indicated that its task was "first of all to liberate Bessarabia from the yoke of the Romanian occupation by organizing the peasants into the Union, and then the creation of a workers' and peasants' government and reunification with the Moldavian Soviet Republic beyond the Dniester"⁵⁰⁶. For its part, the Romanian

government launched a noisy press campaign after the Vienna conference to discredit the very idea of a plebiscite. Terror was intensified in Bessarabia. Abroad, Romanian diplomats sought to achieve the earliest possible ratification of the Bessarabian Protocol by Italy and Japan. For Romania, the support of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia for its position on the Bessarabian question was very important. However, at the conference of the Little Entente in July-August 1924, they advised the Romanian government to resolve the Bessarabian issue with the USSR peacefully. Here it was decided that since the USSR had already been recognized de jure by England and France was close to this, then there was no other way out for the Little Entente but to recognize the Soviet Union, but there was no need to hurry with this step, since the Bessarabian issue had not yet been resolved⁵⁰⁷. Italy was also in no hurry to ratify the Paris Protocol, which had previously sought from Romania the conclusion of a profitable trade agreement and compensation for damage to those Italian citizens whose land property had been expropriated in Bessarabia. Britain, which had ratified the Paris Protocol back in 1922, promised

Romania not to discuss the Bessarabian question in negotiations with the Soviet Union. This did not prevent, however, the USSR delegation at the Soviet-British talks, after official greetings, from reading out a special declaration of the Soviet Union on the Bessarabian question. "Officially, from the point of view of international law, Bessarabia remains a territory belonging to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," the declaration said. "Only the Bessarabian people themselves can change this historical fact, and they must be given freedom to express their will, and the Romanian troops and the Romanian administration must be evacuated from the territory of Bessarabia." On behalf of the Soviet delegation before the British delegation was

the question is raised, "what does it intend to do in order to eliminate the injustice committed against the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Bessarabian people"⁵⁰⁸. Now

that during 1924 the USSR was recognized de jure by England, France and Italy, Moscow could afford a more active position on the Bessarabian issue. Soviet diplomats in France and Poland

tried to get the governments of these countries to refuse to support the aggressive aspirations of Romania. On January 26, 1925, in a conversation with French Ambassador to the USSR J. Erbett, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR Litvinov stated that the Soviet Union remained on the basis of its statement on the plebiscite made in Vienna, emphasizing that "we are not going to resolve this issue by force of arms, but we will wait for events..."⁵¹⁰ On December 16, 1925, in a conversation with French Prime Minister A. Brian Chicherin rejected the idea of dividing Bessarabia put forward by Prague and Rome⁵¹¹.

As a result of lengthy negotiations with Poland, on February 18, 1926, Chicherin managed to get an official statement from the Polish envoy in Moscow that "Poland is disinterested in the question of belonging to Bessarabia, but not disinterested in waging war between the USSR and Romania"⁵¹². On March 26, a new Polish-Romanian treaty of mutual assistance was signed, by which the parties pledged to mutually recognize and maintain their territorial integrity against any external attack. The secret military convention listed the USSR, Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria as the main potential threats⁵¹³. On June 10, 1926, a Franco-Romanian treaty was concluded, by which the parties assumed the obligation to

consult in case of a threat to their national interests and the territorial status quo. In the protocol attached to the treaty, the Romanian side declared its readiness "not to undertake any offensive by regular troops against Russia, and also not to allow the formation of irregular troops on its territory for aggression against Russia"⁵¹⁴. Even before a detailed acquaintance with the text of this agreement, Moscow told Paris that the agreement would make a negative impression in the USSR⁵¹⁵. On August 24, in a conversation with the French ambassador in Moscow, Litvinov stated that "we would like a peace agreement with Romania, [...] but Romania evades the agreement. She will be even less willing to come to an agreement now that she feels the strong support of France. Thus, the Franco-Romanian treaty not only does not facilitate agreement, but, on the contrary, perpetuates the current uncertain situation. Consequently, France has done a disservice to the cause of peace and the cause of settling disputes. If France believed that with this treaty she would force us to come to terms with the seizure of Bessarabia and accept the status quo, then she is mistaken.

The Soviet press actively criticized France's policy in Eastern Europe. When the French ambassador in Moscow on September 22 drew Litvinov's attention to the sharp tone of the speeches of Pravda and Izvestia, the latter replied that these articles "are only a weak reflection of the indignation aroused in us"⁵¹⁷. On October 2, 1926, France was handed a note stating that the Soviet government considered the Franco-Romanian treaty as an unfriendly act directed against the interests of both the USSR and the Bessarabian population. "The French Government must know," the note emphasized, "that the peoples of the Soviet Union, as well as the entire population of Bessarabia, have never agreed and will never agree to consider the occupation of Bessarabia as legal, as well as its annexation by Romania ... Promising Romania assistance to France in the event of war and proclaiming the common interests of France and Rumania without any reservations regarding Bessarabia, the French Government supports the aggressive and predatory tendencies of the Rumanian ruling circles.

Taking into account the fact that the Paris Protocol would enter into force only after its ratification by all signatory countries, the Soviet Union made efforts to keep Italy and Japan from this act. On May 26, 1924, the USSR informed Italy that it was protesting against the Romanian occupation of Bessarabia and hoped that the Italian government would not ratify the Paris Protocol of 1920.⁵¹⁹ about non-participation in agreements or actions hostile to each other and became especially acute after the contents of the Franco-Romanian treaty became known⁵²⁰. The Soviet Union put forward Italy's refusal to ratify the Paris Protocol as one of the conditions for signing the Soviet-Italian agreement. However, at that time the influence of the USSR in the international arena was so small that the Italian leadership was much more concerned about the Balkan problems, where it sought to split the Little Entente and secure Romanian assistance in the Italo-Yugoslav confrontation⁵²¹. Therefore, B. Mussolini approved the Italo-Romanian treaty concluded on September 16, 1926, which indicated the possibility of ratifying the Paris Protocol in the future. And the Italian marshal P. Badoglio, who was making a trip to Romania and Bessarabia at that time, speaking at a banquet in Chisinau, declared his readiness to march in the forefront against the Soviet Union⁵²².

On October 6, 1926, Mussolini was given a note stating that the Soviet government does not recognize and does not recognize any act by which Bessarabia, against the will of the population, would be annexed to Romania, and that each such act would be considered by them as a manifestation of unfriendliness towards the Soviet Union. "The purpose of the note," Litvinov pointed out in a conversation with the Italian ambassador in Moscow on November 9, "is to bring to the attention of not only the Italian government about our attitude to the Bessarabian convention, but also to the attention of the whole world, including Romania, that we are not on we do not renounce one iota our rights to Bessarabia. And Chicherin, speaking on December 6, 1926 in Berlin before the representatives of the press, noted that the Soviet Union could not "calmly treat such attacks" as Badoglio's statement in Chisinau⁵²⁵.

When Italy ratified the Paris Protocol on March 9, 1927, the Soviet government declared on March 17

protest. It recalled that during all the talks on Bessarabia, the USSR stood on the point of view that the fate of this territory could and should be decided solely by the free expression of the will of its population, and Romania's refusal of the plebiscite testifies to the understanding of the latter that it exercises its power only force of arms and violence against the will of the population of the region. Moscow once again declared that "the USSR still and invariably considers the annexation of Bessarabia by Romania a fact of naked violence"⁵²⁶. At the same time, the representatives of the USSR in Tokyo did everything to prevent the ratification of the Paris Protocol by Japan, while expressing the hope that "the government of Japan, not wanting to overshadow good relations with the USSR, will continue to refuse to ratify the Bessarabian Protocol"⁵²⁷. On March 14, 1928, Japan notified the USSR that it was not yet going to ratify the Paris Protocol⁵²⁸.

Negotiations in Riga

In July 1928, Czechoslovakia offered the USSR mediation in negotiations with Romania. In the future, it was proposed to exchange the recognition of Bessarabia for Romania for leaving Romanian values for the USSR. On September 29, Litvinov suggested that the Politburo reply to Prague that the USSR was ready to meet with the representative of Romania "for a preliminary discussion of the agreement, but that all negotiations would be unsuccessful if the Romanian government remained in the position it had taken during the Vienna Conference"⁵²⁹. For its part, the Romanian leadership remained in the position "not to discuss the issue of borders"⁵³⁰. As a result, the mediation of Prague was

not useful. On September 6, 1928, the USSR joined the Briand-Kellogg Pact and was the only one of all the participating states to ratify it before the end of the year. On December 29, Moscow proposed to Poland and Lithuania to sign a protocol on the early entry into force of this treaty so that any state that signed the pact would later join the protocol. But Warsaw proposed to expand the list of participants in the future agreement by involving Romania, Latvia and Estonia. Upon learning of this, Lithuania refused to participate in the multilateral agreement. For Poland and Romania, this was another reason to demonstrate the strength of their military alliance. On January 11, 1929, the Soviet side indicated to Poland that it was not opposed to the participation of Romania in the proposed protocol, but this did not at all eliminate the existing Soviet-Romanian disputes⁵³¹. In the end, on February 1, 1929, Moscow accepted the Polish proposal, and on February 9, the USSR, Poland, Romania, Latvia and Estonia signed the Moscow Protocol on the early entry into force of the Briand-Kellogg Treaty. Turkey joined the protocol on 27 February, Iran on 3 April, and Lithuania on 4 April⁵³².

The Romanian side tried to give this document the character of recognition by the Soviet Union of Bessarabia as part of Romania, therefore, when signing it, Litvinov stated that "the fact that among us, as a delegate signing the protocol, is a representative of a state with which the Union does not have normal diplomatic relations and with which he has long-standing serious, unresolved and not resolved by this Protocol disputes, is only additional evidence of the peacefulness of the Soviet Union. On February 10, the Izvestiya newspaper published this Soviet position. In a conversation with the representative of Romania, K. Davila, Litvinov pointed out that for Romania the settlement of the issue of its border on the Dniester was of much greater importance than for the USSR, and that Moscow remained on the basis of its proposal for a plebiscite⁵³⁵. The same position was confirmed in the resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of March 28, 1929 and in the speech of the Chairman of the Council of People's

Commissars of the USSR A.I. Rykov on May 23⁵³⁶. In 1929, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, K. Argetoianu, frankly stated that "Romania wants to create a Central European Union against the USSR. This union should include Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Italy. The Kellogg Pact is primarily of moral significance. No one can force the state that has signed the pact not to wage war if it wants this war. Europe must not forget that Romania protects Europe from the Russian danger. The conference of the Little Entente in May 1929, discussing the question of relations with the USSR, at the initiative of Romania and Yugoslavia, spoke in favor of a new delay in the establishment of diplomatic relations with Moscow⁵³⁸. On December 5, 1929, the United States proposed to Romania to make a statement condemning the actions of the Soviet Union during the conflict on the CER, which the United States, Britain and France had already done. It was not

excluded that all the countries of the Little Entente and Poland would join this demarche. It is clear that Moscow tried to keep its Western neighbors from this step. Speaking at the second session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, Litvinov recalled that "on our southwestern border, one of the provinces that has not formally separated from our Union is still in the occupation of another country. This occupation is overlooked by the self-appointed guardians of the Kellogg Pact. I mean Bessarabia, whose population has never ceased to strive for reunification with our Union. Nevertheless, Romania acceded to the American note, and on December 21, on the day when the Soviet-Chinese protocol on the normalization of relations was signed in Khabarovsk, the French ambassador in Moscow tried to convey this Romanian note to Litvinov, who refused not only to accept it, but also listen. The Soviet side quite rightly stated that a state that refuses to resume normal relations with the USSR and occupies part of the Soviet territory should hardly

come out with moralizing on the topic of peacefulness. In the context of growing economic problems and social protests of the population, Romania has relied on strengthening its armed forces. In the winter of 1930, negotiati

weapons and military equipment, and the Romanian press again launched a campaign about the "Soviet military threat." In the summer, Romania, like the rest of the countries of the Little Entente, approved the French idea of "pan-Europe". In January 1931, Bucharest spoke out against Moscow's invitation to discuss this project. On January 15, the Polish-Romanian Treaty of Mutual Assistance was extended. Along with the United States and France, Romania tried to participate in the economic boycott of the USSR, preventing Soviet supplies along the Danube⁵⁴¹. Moreover, the Romanian government confiscated a batch of galoshes purchased in the USSR, as their soles bore the "Hammer and Sickle" mark, which could "be a means of conducting Soviet propaganda", especially in Bessarabia⁵⁴². It is clear that all this did not contribute to the improvement

of Soviet-Romanian relations. In May-June 1931, Soviet-French negotiations began on the conclusion of non-aggression and trade pacts. On August 10, the Soviet-French non-aggression pact was initialed, and France suggested that Poland also reach a similar agreement with the USSR. On August 23, the Polish side was handed over to the Soviet side a proposal to resume negotiations on a non-aggression pact, and France on September 23 announced that the signing of the Soviet-French treaty was conditional on the achievement of a Soviet-Polish agreement. For its part, Moscow suggested that Paris persuade Warsaw to soften its position and pointed out the impossibility of linking the two treaties.

In May 1931, Poland notified Romania of the imminent resumption of negotiations with the USSR and offered Bucharest its mediation if it was ready for similar negotiations with Moscow. On November 14, Warsaw offered its mediation to Moscow on the basis of "leaving the question of Bessarabia aside." However, the Soviet Union, although it supported this Polish idea, preferred to conduct bilateral negotiations without intermediaries. On November 25, the Romanian government asked France for possible negotiations with Moscow. On November 27, Paris confirmed its consent to these negotiations and declared its readiness to maintain its obligations with respect to Bucharest in any case. On December 5, Romania invited the USSR to conclude a non-aggression pact. Moscow, on the other hand, hoped that it would be possible to start negotiations with Romania on the "normalization of relations", but basically it was a Soviet concession to Poland and France. In December 1931 an agreement was reached that the Soviet-Romanian negotiations would be held in Riga,⁵⁴³ and the parties agreed that the question of Bessarabia would be left aside. Promoted by France and Poland, Romania was not inclined to rush things and took the Polish draft non-aggression treaty as a basis, adding to it a text that could be interpreted as an indirect recognition of Bessarabia as part of Romania⁵⁴⁴. Simultaneously, in December

1931, negotiations between the USSR began with Finland and Latvia, with which non-aggression pacts were signed on January 21 and February 5, 1932, respectively. Meanwhile, on January 6, 1932, Soviet-Romanian negotiations began in Riga. The Soviet delegation was headed by a member of the board of the NKID B.S. Stomonyakov, and the Romanian one - Charge d'Affaires in Latvia M. Sturdza. As expected, the main discussion revolved around the question of whether or not to designate the issue of Bessarabia in the forthcoming agreement. On January 20, the Romanian side declared that until the Soviet side accepted a firm commitment not to include the question of Bessarabia in the non-aggression pact in any way, it considered it useless to continue the negotiations that had begun⁵⁴⁵. On January 26, TASS published an interview with Litvinov, who outlined the Soviet position, which was to mention in the treaty the existence of unresolved problems between both countries, since "we cannot conclude any agreements with Romania that could be interpreted as our indirect or tacit recognition of the capture of Bessarabia"⁵⁴⁶. Actually, this is exactly what did not suit the Romanian side. As a result, negotiations were practically curtailed⁵⁴⁷. On January 25, the Soviet-Polish treaty was initialed, but Warsaw assured Bucharest that it would not sign it until the moment when the USSR concluded similar treaties with all its Western neighbors.

In contacts with Moscow, Paris and Warsaw continued to insist that they would sign treaties with the USSR only after a Soviet-Romanian agreement was reached. Accordingly, the Romanian Prime Minister N. Iorga on February 1, speaking in Parliament, expressed gratitude to Poland and France for supporting the Romanian position⁵⁴⁸. True, already in February 1932 Warsaw began persistently advising Bucharest to find a way to negotiate with the USSR. In May, Poland intensified its efforts to speed up the Soviet-Romanian negotiations, but while Moscow accepted some of the Polish compromise proposals, Bucharest rejected all. From the summer of 1932, France also began to actively act as an intermediary. Once again, the USSR accepted many compromise proposals, while Romania rejected them⁵⁴⁹. On June 23, on behalf of Poland, Moscow was offered a new compromise (Romanian) version of the treaty, but everything again came up against the question of mentioning or not mentioning the existence of controversial problems in Soviet-Romanian relations, and the Soviet side proposed to return to eliminating differences on the text agreed in Riga. All these delays and the uncompromising position of Romania led Poland to decide to sign an agreement with the USSR without waiting for the completion of the Soviet-Romanian negotiations. It is clear that Bucharest, having received a Polish notification of this, declared that Poland had taken an unfriendly position, which, however, did not prevent Warsaw from signing a non-aggression pact with the USSR on July 25 and refusing to officially confirm its readiness to link its ratification with the signing of a similar Soviet-Romanian agreements. In this situation, negotiations were postponed until autumn.

This time France tried to put pressure on Poland to slow down the ratification of the Soviet-Polish treaty, while Romania was told that the Soviet-French treaty would not be signed until

the end of the Soviet-Romanian negotiations. After consultations with the USSR, on September 1, France proposed to Romania a new version of the final protocol: "This treaty, containing the obligation of each of the parties to refrain from any attack on the other, will be interpreted in the sense that no dispute, territorial or otherwise, existing between the parties, may never limit the said obligation and may not serve as a motive for either of the contracting parties or give them freedom to commit acts anywhere contrary to the obligation of non-aggression established by this treaty. It is also understood that this treaty cannot serve other purposes, in particular, it cannot be interpreted as a resolution of the noted disputed issues existing between

parties at the time of signing this agreement, which issues are not affected by its conclusion.

Although this compromise proposal was also rejected by Romania, France tried to resume the Soviet-Romanian negotiations and hinted to Bucharest that, in case of his intransigence, she would also sign an agreement with Moscow⁵⁵². On September 13, the Polish ambassador in Moscow handed over to the Soviet side a new compromise proposal and a new Romanian draft non-aggression pact approved by France⁵⁵³. At the same time, Romania sought from France that, as a condition for signing an agreement with the USSR, it demanded from the Soviet side a written declaration of non-aggression against Romania⁵⁵⁴. It is clear that France was in no hurry to complicate its relations with the USSR. On September 17, an agreement was reached that the Soviet-Romanian negotiations would be resumed in Geneva. In the meantime, during meetings between Litvinov and the Romanian ambassador to Poland, V. Kadere, by October 2, the text of the treaty was generally agreed upon. Moscow even agreed to sign it, but the Romanian side insisted on the exclusion of the words "existing disputes" from the final protocol and was willing to make no compromises. The resigned Romanian ambassador in London N. Titulescu, who had previously repeatedly publicly opposed the signing of an agreement that did not contain the recognition of Bessarabia by the Soviet side as part of Romania, on October 11 in Paris tried to obtain France's assistance in recognizing the Romanian border along the Dniester by the Soviet Union. At the same time, he declared that the Soviet-French treaty was not at all conditioned by the Soviet-Romanian one. The Soviet side informed France and Poland that it was ready to sign the treaty if Romania agreed to the text agreed in Geneva.

Under these conditions, the USSR on October 16 announced that Romania was deliberately delaying the negotiations. On October 20, Titulescu, who became the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania, applied for mediation to Poland, but was refused, as Warsaw did not believe that Romania wanted to reach an agreement⁵⁵⁸. Then, on November 1, Bucharest sent its proposals to Paris, which on November 3 sent them to Moscow. Now Romania wanted to revise the text of Article 4 and drop the words about existing disputes in the final protocol⁵⁵⁹. In response, the USSR declared that it was ready to wait another 4 months for Romania's consent to the signing of the text of the non-aggression treaty agreed in Geneva, if France immediately signed the long-prepared Soviet-French treaty. In any case, Moscow is going to pursue a policy based on the Briand-Kellogg pact⁵⁶⁰. Speaking in parliament on November 23, Titulescu declared that "Romania cannot agree to such a non-aggression pact today or ever"⁵⁶¹. Under these conditions, Poland ratified the Soviet-Polish non-aggression treaty on November 27, and France signed a similar treaty with the USSR on November 29⁵⁶². As a result, Moscow managed to somewhat neutralize the anti-Soviet orientation of the Polish-Romanian and Franco-Romanian treaties of 1926 and 1931.⁵⁶³

New Trends in International Relations The position

of Romania during the Soviet-Romanian negotiations showed that Bucharest was no longer in a hurry to fulfill all the requests of France, which reflected the decline of French influence in the countries of Eastern Europe. On February 15, 1933, the Soviet-French non-aggression pact entered into force. On February 16, the countries of the Little Entente signed the Organization Act, which reflected the strengthening of their union, aimed at maintaining the existing status quo. Naturally, France and the USSR approved this step, while Germany, Italy and Hungary, which were getting closer and closer, condemned it. Moreover, already on March 14, Italy offered Romania to refuse support for Yugoslavia in its territorial disputes with Hungary and Bulgaria in exchange for the latter's refusal of territorial claims to Bucharest. On the

20th of February 1933, in the capitals of the great powers of Europe, discussions began on the "Pact of Four" proposed by Mussolini (England, France, Germany and Italy). Naturally, Poland and other Eastern European allies of France did not support this idea⁵⁶⁴, and the USSR also spoke out against its implementation. On March 25, 1933, the Little Entente opposed such an agreement and tried to influence the positions of Britain and France. However, it quickly became clear that the small countries had no real levers of influence, and gradually their criticism of the Pact of Four subsided. On May 30–31, the Little Entente reconciled with the French project of the "Pact of the Four"⁵⁶⁵. However, the small countries of Eastern Europe were well aware that in the new conditions it would be worthwhile to focus not only on France.

As early as February 22, 1933, Romania notified Germany that economic and political relations with it should not be violated by any decisions of the Little Entente and, under certain conditions, Bucharest would not oppose Berlin's revanchist aspirations. On March 17, the Romanian King Carol II told the Völkischer Beobachter correspondent that he attaches great importance to strengthening relations with Germany and "the Polish question cannot interfere with this." The day before, similar ideas were informally brought to the attention of

information from Berlin through the leader of the Romanian fascists Sh. Tatarescu. The only thing that worried the Romanian leadership was the prospect of a German-Hungarian rapprochement, which should have been blocked by concessions to Germany. For its part, Berlin considered it necessary to completely change Romania's foreign policy orientation. In May, Romania's desire for closer relations with Germany was brought to the attention of Berlin. In response, Hitler declared that if the Little Entente was favorable to Germany, he would try to minimize the possibility of arming Hungary. As a condition for the German-Romanian rapprochement, the demand was put forward for Bucharest to withdraw from the former foreign policy alliances⁵⁶⁶.

In the meantime, on June 7, the Pact of the Four was initialed. On June 21, Bucharest tried to sound out Berlin's position regarding the refusal to support Hungary's territorial claims in exchange for Romania's willingness not to object to Austria's annexation to Germany. On July 15, a Pact of Accord and Cooperation between England, France, Italy and Germany (the "Pact of the Four")⁵⁶⁸ was signed in Rome, which did not enter into force, since it was not ratified by France. In early August 1933, a personal representative of the head of the Romanian government arrived in Berlin, who confirmed Bucharest's readiness to establish close economic and political ties with Germany, but the German leadership demanded a complete reorientation of Romania's foreign policy. However, the withdrawal of Germany from the League of Nations, the intensification of revanchist propaganda in Hungary and the position of France led to the fact that Romania was in no hurry to change its policy. It became obvious that no immediate foreign policy reorientation of the Romanian leadership was foreseen.

In the meantime, the USSR supported and expanded the French plan for ensuring security in Europe and submitted a convention on the definition of the aggressor (attacker) to the disarmament conference. Already in March, the countries of the Little Entente supported the Soviet proposal. On April 9, the USSR invited Poland to take part in a conference to sign a convention on the definition of aggression, but Warsaw, which generally approved this idea, suggested that Moscow first regulate its relations with Romania. However, the solidarity position of the countries of the Little Entente allowed Rumania on June 24, on its behalf, to declare its readiness to sign a convention on the definition of aggression without resolving the Bessarabian issue⁵⁷⁰.

Under these conditions, Poland had to agree to the Soviet proposal, but Warsaw advocated the signing of a regional convention, and not open to signing by all comers. Thus, the Polish leadership demonstrated its independence and tried to put pressure on Germany, in fact supporting its fears about signing an open document. In addition, Warsaw opposed the participation in the convention of the countries of the Little Entente, since this could hurt the interests of Hungary and Italy, with which Poland had good relations. The Bessarabian question was bypassed on the basis of an agreement that the protocol would indicate the inviolability of the territory "under the authority" of the contracting parties. As a result, on July 3 the USSR, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan signed a regional protocol, and on July 4 the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia and Turkey signed an open convention on the definition of aggression⁵⁷¹. The Romanian leadership used this convention to propagate its version of the solution of the Bessarabian issue⁵⁷². For his part, on December 29, at the IV session of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR, Litvinov stated that the territorial dispute with Romania was still not resolved⁵⁷³.

In the second half of 1933, the Soviet Union actually supported the French idea of collective security in Europe, and in December the Soviet leadership determined the country's new foreign policy⁵⁷⁴. The discussion of the idea of the Eastern Pact between Paris and Moscow, which began in the autumn of 1933, led in the spring of 1934 to the appearance of a draft agreement providing for the conclusion of an agreement between the USSR, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Baltic countries and a Soviet-French treaty of mutual assistance related to the Eastern Pact and Locarno agreements. It was assumed that France would provide assistance to the USSR in the event of an attack on it by any of the participants in the Eastern Pact, and Soviet assistance to France would be carried out in the event of an attack on it by any of the participants in the Locarno agreements. For France, the implementation of this project was due to the entry of the USSR into the League of Nations, and Moscow considered it mandatory for France and Poland to participate in the agreement. However, French soundings of Poland on the subject of its participation in the projected agreement showed that the Polish leadership is cautious about multilateral agreements and fears the strengthening of the international influence of

the USSR. In the context of the obvious rapprochement between France and the USSR, the countries of the Little Entente on January 22-23, 1934 discussed the prospects for establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. If Czechoslovakia, whose relations with Poland after the signing on January 26, 1934 of the German-Polish declaration on the peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-use of force⁵⁷⁵ worsened, was interested in accelerating the normalization of relations with the USSR, then Yugoslavia was against immediate steps in this direction, hoping for the support of Germany in the event of an aggravation of relations with Italy. Romania, on the other hand, sought to link the restoration of diplomatic relations with the settlement of the Bessarabian issue in its favor. As a result, it was decided that "the three states of the Little Entente will restore normal diplomatic relations with the USSR as soon as there are political and diplomatic conditions that meet the interests of each of the three countries"⁵⁷⁶. In the meantime, the Romanian leadership was busy determining the country's future foreign policy. French influence in Romania was gradually weakening, which was also due to the unwillingness of France to make concessions on the issue of paying debts on loans. Accordingly, the pro-German circles in Bucharest used this fact in every possible way for propaganda in favor of focusing on Berlin, which continued its tough course towards Roma

striving to achieve its final rejection of the pro-French orientation. The intensity of passions was so great that on the night of December 31, 1933, members of the Iron Guard killed the Romanian Prime Minister I. Duca.

On February 6, 1934, diplomatic relations were established between Hungary and the USSR⁵⁷⁷. In the meantime, lengthy negotiations, backed by France, came to an end, and on February 9 the Balkan Pact was signed, by which Romania, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey guaranteed their borders and pledged to support each other in the event of a threat to the territorial status quo. The Rome Protocols signed in March by Italy, Austria and Hungary became the answer to it. During the discussion of the idea of the Eastern Pact, since April 1934, under the influence of France, Romania began to more and more definitely lean towards the normalization of relations with the USSR. Since that time, direct Soviet-Romanian negotiations began, during which Titulescu again tried to get the USSR to declare that it would renounce Bessarabia in exchange for the establishment of diplomatic relations⁵⁷⁹. For its part, Moscow, of course, was not inclined to make such statements and insisted on the resumption of diplomatic relations in full. In the end, the parties agreed to leave the Bessarabian question aside⁵⁸⁰. France and Czechoslovakia also pressed Romania and Yugoslavia to speed up their agreement with Moscow. As a result, on June 9, 1934, an exchange of letters took place in Geneva, according to which Romania and Czechoslovakia established normal diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union⁵⁸¹. On July 23, diplomatic relations were established between the USSR and Bulgaria⁵⁸². This testified to a noticeable

increase in the role of the USSR in the international arena. Nevertheless, the Romanian leadership used the fact of establishing diplomatic relations with Moscow to prove the version that the Soviet side finally recognized Bessarabia as part of Romania. However, the Soviet position on this issue remained unchanged, and in no Soviet-Romanian agreements of a political or technical nature there is any indication that the Dniester is a border river⁵⁸³. Since September 1934, a direct telephone, telegraph and postal connection was established between Romania and the USSR, and on February 8, 1935, an agreement was reached on the establishment of a direct railway connection, according to which a bridge near Tiraspol was restored on the Dniester (291.6 m). Three other railway bridges near Rybnitsa, Mogilev-Podolsky and on the Kamenets-Podolsk-Larga line remained destroyed. On July 17, Moscow turned to England, France, Italy and Romania with a proposal to include the USSR in the European Danube Commission, but, despite the positive reaction of Paris and Rome, the negotiations showed that Bucharest and London, which stood behind it, actually frustrated the resolution of this issue that satisfied the USSR⁵⁸⁴.

In the meantime, the negotiations for the Eastern Pact during 1934 showed that this agreement was opposed by England, Germany and Poland, who took the idea negatively. The German leadership was afraid that such an agreement would make expansion impossible, and the Polish leadership would lose the opportunity to become a great power due to the growing influence of the USSR in Europe. Such a position of Poland became for England a convenient cover for her negative attitude towards this agreement. On September 18, the USSR was admitted to the League of Nations. Meanwhile, negotiations on the Eastern Pact finally reached an impasse, since neither Germany nor Poland agreed to participate in this association.

In the spring of 1934, Romania tried to involve the Little Entente in the negotiations on the Eastern Pact and thereby extend its guarantees to the Balkans. However, the Soviet Union rejected this proposal, since it was not going to worsen relations with Italy and Hungary. France also did not support him. At the same time, on July 26, Moscow told Paris that "we are ready, however, to conclude, in addition to the Eastern Pact, a special Soviet-Polish-Romanian protocol on mutual assistance, if Romania and Poland so desire." For his part, Titulescu, on September 2, suggested to Litvinov, in order to calm Romanian public opinion, "to come up with some kind of tripartite combination with the participation of Romania and the USSR, either with Poland or with France." But things did not go beyond these general phrases. In September 1934, Romania again raised the question of its now individual participation in the Eastern Pact, but a month later it lost interest in this proposal. At the same time, Bucharest continued to probe Berlin for mediation in Franco-German relations and to express readiness to maintain "good relations with Germany"⁵⁸⁵.

The assassination on October 9, 1934 in Marseilles of the French Foreign Minister and an active supporter of the Eastern Pact, L. Barthou, led to the fact that henceforth for Paris this idea became only a means of pressure on Berlin in order to force it to an agreement with France. In the meantime, the sluggish Franco-Polish negotiations on the Eastern Pact showed that without the participation of Germany, Poland would not agree to sign this agreement⁵⁸⁶. On November 12 and December 10, 1934, Romania declared to Germany that it was ready to improve bilateral relations and mediate in reconciliation between Germany and France.

The determining factor in the development of international relations in Europe was the relationship between England, France, Germany and Italy. It was England that became the force that tried to modernize the Versailles system by creating a new balance of power in continental Europe. The result of this British policy was the connivance of any actions of Germany, starting with its withdrawal from the League of Nations in October 1933. Not wanting to contribute to the creation of the system of collective security proposed by France in Europe, London actually supported the intransigent position of Poland and Germany regarding the Eastern Pact. Even when in March 1935 Germany openly violated the military restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, England, although it condemned these actions, entered into bilateral negotiations on naval problems, as a result of which Germany received a legal opportunity to create a navy. chief

The motive of the British leadership was to prevent the deepening of the crisis in Europe, which should have allowed England to maintain its international influence. On March 10–16,

1935, Germany announced its refusal to comply with the military restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, which caused fears in Romania about the possibility of similar steps on the part of Hungary and Bulgaria⁵⁸⁸. This unilateral step by Germany led to the fact that on March 30, France offered the USSR to conclude an agreement on mutual assistance, which was signed on May 2. However, the issue of a military convention with the development of measures to organize this assistance was postponed by the French side⁵⁸⁹. On May 16, the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty of Mutual Assistance was signed. For its part, Poland in May 1935 notified France not to count on Warsaw's automatic support of the Soviet-French mutual assistance treaty. On May 23, Carol II assured the German military attaché in Bucharest that Romania would not allow the passage of Soviet troops. In the meantime, on March 23, 1935, a long-term German-Romanian economic agreement was signed⁵⁹¹. At the same time, Romania informed Germany that it would not join the Eastern Pact unless Berlin and Warsaw were involved. Romania is not obliged to help France in the event of a Franco-German conflict and will enter the war only if Hungary intervenes in it. At the end of April 1935, Romania again offered Germany mediation in establishing German-French relations. In response, Berlin recommended that Bucharest begin this noble mission from Paris. At the beginning of May 1935, German-Romanian economic negotiations were held in Bucharest, at which, with the help of Titulescu, the German delegation managed to achieve favorable agreements signed on May 24⁵⁹³. An important step was taken towards the economic subjugation of Romania

German influence.

It is clear that such an agreement did not cause joy in either Paris or Moscow, and both countries asked Bucharest about its policy towards Germany. Naturally, Titulescu declared his ignorance and non-participation in these agreements, although the German documents now available completely refute this version. Significant efforts to change the pro-French orientation of Romania were made not only by the German, but also by the Polish embassy in Bucharest, which repeatedly drew the attention of the Romanian government to the inexpediency of the Soviet-Romanian rapprochement. Polish diplomats in Romania widely promoted the idea of German-Polish-Romanian friendship as opposed to focusing on France and the USSR. The Polish embassy even intimidated Bucharest with the threat of leaving Romania to its fate, while Poland and Yugoslavia would move closer to Germany. The main target of the Romanian right and their Berlin and Warsaw friends was Titulescu. England also supported the rejection of Romania's rapprochement with the Soviet Union. In the meantime, on May 29–31, 1935, the USSR handed over to Romania 1,443 boxes (135 tons) with archival documents and

manuscripts from its Academy of Sciences⁵⁹⁴. In June 1935, a steamship service was opened along the Odessa–Constanta line. In July, a protocol was signed on the transit of Romanian goods through the USSR, and the Moscow–Prague airline passed through Romanian airspace⁵⁹⁵. On June 24, Romania probed the USSR for a mutual assistance treaty against both Germany and Hungary in exchange for recognizing Bessarabia as part of Romania. In response, Moscow declared that it would not renounce its rights to Bessarabia and did not intend to provide assistance to Bucharest against Hungary, since Romania refused to denounce the alliance treaty with Warsaw and ruled out assistance from the USSR in the event of a war with Poland⁵⁹⁷. Nevertheless, during the Romanian-Yugoslav meeting on July 11–13, it was decided that Bucharest could conclude a mutual assistance pact with Moscow. However, at the same time, Romania told Germany that it would not take any steps to the detriment of Berlin. On July 21, the Romanian embassy in Berlin was instructed to bring to the attention of the German side that an agreement on mutual assistance with the USSR is possible only if it guarantees the territorial integrity of Romania and its allies. If such an agreement is reached, Bucharest is ready to conclude an identical treaty with Germany, so that she also guarantees the Romanian borders.

Although there was no official information about the Soviet-Romanian negotiations, opponents of rapprochement with the USSR in Bucharest were louder and louder about the inadmissibility of concessions to Moscow. Accordingly, Titulescu had to refute rumors of negotiations with his eastern neighbor. The campaign to discredit the idea of rapprochement with the USSR was conducted by Germany, which knew for sure that negotiations were still going on. In October 1935, Bucharest informed Warsaw and London that it would not agree to an agreement granting the Red Army the right of passage through Romanian territory. In November 1935, the Polish-Romanian union treaty was extended. At the same time, it became clear that the Romanian leadership took a more cautious position regarding the mutual assistance treaty with the USSR. However, while Bucharest was not ready for a sharp change in foreign policy, in addition, there was hope that the USSR would agree to recognize the border along the Dniester. As a result, it was decided to continue negotiations. At the same time, Titulescu also had to moderate his appetites somewhat. If on June 24 he suggested that the Soviet side take the Soviet-French treaty as a basis, then on November 16 it was already the Soviet-Czechoslovak one. In general, Titulescu's position in these negotiations was at least not clearly defined. For its part, Moscow was ready to discuss any possible proposals, except for the recognition of the annexation of Bessarabia. But this is exactly what the Romanian leadership was trying to achieve. It is clear that in the presence of such disagreements, the negotiations assumed a sluggish character⁶⁰⁰. On February 15, 1936, the Soviet-

Romanian agreement on payments and other economic

documents, but there was no noticeable expansion of Soviet-Romanian trade, since at that time Romania was more concerned with expanding economic ties with Germany and Italy. In addition, it should be remembered that Romania and the USSR offered a similar set of goods for foreign trade and, naturally, were not interested in mutual trade. As a result, the share of Romania in Soviet foreign trade in the second half of the 1930s. continued to be insignificant (see table 1)⁶⁰¹.

Table 1

Share of Romania in foreign trade of the USSR (%)

	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Экспорт	0,05	0,02	0,17	0,04	0,02	0,26
Импорт	0,001	0,001	0,13	0,06	—	—
Оборот	0,03	0,01	0,15	0,05	0,006	0,13

Bucharest between Paris and Berlin At the

same time, Romania continued to drift towards Germany. On November 9, 1935, Titulescu, in a conversation with the German charge d'affaires in Romania, stated that he "never gave consent to the Russians for the passage of troops" and "would conclude a pact of mutual assistance with them only on the condition that it was not directed against Germany"⁶⁰². On February 24, 1936, the constant readiness of Bucharest to seek friendly relations with Germany was brought to the attention of Berlin. The Romanian envoy in Berlin stated that his country was not going to grant the USSR the right of passage of the Red Army through Romanian territory and, in the event of an agreement with Moscow, was ready to sign an identical agreement with Germany if it guaranteed the Romanian borders⁶⁰³. In March, Romania reaffirmed its German-friendly position and readiness to mediate in Germany's negotiations with Britain and France.

Counting on the creation of an agreement of the great powers of Europe under its auspices, England feared that the collapse of the fascist regime in Italy and the Nazi regime in Germany would lead to the Bolshevization of these countries and thereby sharply increase the threat to the positions of London. Therefore, despite the sometimes rather harsh rhetoric regarding the actions of Italy and Germany, England tried to keep all the doors open for an agreement with them. This explains the fact that when the Wehrmacht occupied the Rhine demilitarized zone on March 7, 1936, London in every possible way kept Paris from any countermeasures. During the discussion of this issue in the Council of the League of Nations on March 14-19, it was decided to refrain from any action. The Soviet proposal of March 17 about readiness to support any action of the League of Nations⁶⁰⁴ naturally remained unanswered. If we take into account that on February 16 the Popular Front came to power in Spain, which was perceived by the conservative British leadership almost as the Bolshevization of the country, then the position of England will be quite logical. Berlin's anti-communist rhetoric found a favorable audience on the banks of the Thames. Therefore, when a civil war began in Spain on July 18, 1936 and the Republican government had to practically re-create a land army, it was England, under the pretext of the danger of a war with Germany and Italy, that put pressure on France so that it would not sell to Madrid weapon.

It is clear that the remilitarization of the Rhineland, presented by the German side as a response to the beginning of the process of ratification of the Soviet-French pact of mutual assistance, and the passivity of France⁶⁰⁵ only increased Romania's readiness for friendship with Germany. It was quite obvious that the Romanian ruling elite was increasingly inclined to opt for orientation towards Germany and Italy. The background of this choice was explained in his speech at the end of March 1936 by the leader of the Peasant Party Vaida-Voevod: "Over the past two years, our policy has slid down a dangerous slope. We have reached the point where Litvinov has become our stronghold. Now the situation is quite clear. There is a struggle between nationalism and communism. Therefore, we must make a choice. I choose Mussolini and Hitler. I choose Mussolini because he... saved the Italian nation from communist danger and now fascist glory shines on African heights... As for Hitler, this... figure saved European civilization... Without Hitler, France would be communist today »⁶⁰⁶.

During the session of the Balkan Entente on May 4-6, 1936, it was decided to limit mutual assistance obligations only to the Balkan countries⁶⁰⁷. In the summer of 1936, Romania offered France to conclude an agreement on mutual assistance with the Little Entente, but in the conditions of the growing influence of supporters of the "appeasement" policy of Germany in the French leadership, it was impossible to implement this proposal⁶⁰⁸. When discussing the Italo-Ethiopian conflict in the League of Nations in July 1936, Titulescu asked French Prime Minister L. Blum a public question whether small countries could count on France in the face of the German threat. "Reassure us, Mr. President of the Council of Ministers of France, or at least tell us the truth! For we do not forget that on March 7 you did not defend yourselves, so how will you defend us from the aggressor?"⁶⁰⁹ The silence of the French premier was more eloquent than any words.

By this time, it became clear to the Soviet leadership that the Soviet-Romanian negotiations on a mutual assistance pact had reached an impasse. The Romanian side tried to achieve recognition by the Soviet Union of the annexation of Bessarabia and sought to link the future treaty with the Soviet-French one, and assistance to Moscow from Romania in the event of a Soviet-Polish war was excluded. For concessions on these issues, neither Moscow nor

Bucharest was not going to go, which means that it was not necessary to count on an early agreement⁶¹⁰. Nevertheless, on June 30, 1936, Titulescu notified the Romanian leadership that he intended to bring the negotiations on a mutual assistance pact with the USSR to its logical conclusion, "after which he would like to concentrate future activities on the normalization of relations with Germany, the final result of which will be (which and not so improbable) reaching an agreement between Germany and Russia", which should not come at the expense of

Romania. On July 11–14, 1936, a new crisis arose in the Romanian government, but Titulescu again managed, by blackmailing him with his resignation, to maintain the foreign policy course and continue negotiations with the USSR⁶¹². On July 20–21, in Montreux, Titulescu and Litvinov decided to bypass the issue of Bessarabia and actually agreed on the main provisions of the treaty, which were to become the basis for further negotiations. The parties disagreed only on the question of the connection between their treaty and the actions of France. This document provided for the possibility of allowing Soviet troops to enter the territory of Romania⁶¹³. However, Titulescu did not inform the government about the initialing of the draft agreement, since he actually exceeded his powers. Moreover, pro-fascist forces were gaining more and more influence in Bucharest. Italy, Germany and Poland gently but strongly advised the Romanian government to get rid of the overly pro-French foreign minister. On August 29, the government resigned in order to return to its duties on the same day with the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, V. Antonescu. Although Bucharest loudly declared that the principles of its foreign policy would be preserved, naturally no one believed in this. On September 19, Antonescu assured Litvinov that "Romania's foreign policy remains unchanged in relation to the allied and friendly powers, and especially Russia"⁶¹⁵.

On October 1, in response to assurances of friendship from Antonescu, Litvinov quite rightly stated that "political friendship has its value only when it is not hidden," but if the Romanian minister "whispers in my ear about friendship, but publicly bows to Germany and Poland, then this will not bring any benefit either to us or to Romania. It became obvious that negotiations with the USSR on a mutual assistance treaty were a thing of the past, and Romania was increasingly drawn into the wake of German politics⁶¹⁷. Under these conditions, Moscow was forced to confine itself to the role of an observer⁶¹⁸. During 1936, 31 cases of shelling from the Romanian side of the Soviet territory, residents and border guards were recorded⁶¹⁹. During the Italo-Ethiopian war, although Romania joined the system of economic sanctions, it increased its exports to Italy through third countries. In the autumn of 1936, Antonescu declared that "the Romanian government has great hopes for a favorable resolution of the Abyssinian conflict and that Romania, as a Latin state, does not intend to infringe on the glory and strength of Latin Italy"⁶²⁰. On September 24, 1936, a new German-Romanian economic agreement was concluded, which expanded the supply of Romanian raw materials to the Third Reich on the basis of clearing. As a result, the turnover of German trade with Romania increased from 109.6 million marks in 1934 to 300 million marks in 1937, and the share of Romania in German exports increased from 27.8% in 1933 to 37.2% in 1937 g.⁶²¹

At the end of November 1936, the visit of the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs to Warsaw took place, which was perceived by foreign observers as a demonstration of the Polish-Romanian alliance. During the visit, Antonescu told journalists that Romania did not want to be in either the Soviet or anti-Soviet bloc⁶²². In fact, Romania has publicly put an end to the game of collective security. In November 1936, Hitler announced that he was ready to guarantee the Romanian borders in exchange for Bucharest's friendly political line towards Germany. "The Hungarian revisionist statements should not be taken to heart... The real danger that threatens Romania in the European world is Bolshevism. But if Romania wants to become an outpost of the European order, then no state will be more interested than Germany in its support ..."⁶²³ At the end of 1936, Germany invited Romania to join the Anti-Comintern Pact and was ready to provide loans for the purchase of weapons and conclude an agreement on the guarantee of the Romanian borders. However, the Romanian leadership decided to wait⁶²⁴.

From the second half of 1936 it became clear that the unity of the Little Entente was largely illusory, since neither Romania nor Yugoslavia were ready to support Czechoslovakia in the event of a conflict with Germany. On the whole, this position of Romania met the aspirations of Germany, which was interested in dividing its Eastern European neighbors. In an effort to intensify the split of the Little Entente, the German press lashed out at Czechoslovakia, presenting it as a conductor of the Comintern's influence, but extolled Romania, which refused the treaty with the USSR. It is clear that Bucharest's foreign policy drifted more and more towards Berlin, while England and France practically ceased their active policy in Eastern Europe. On March 20, 1937, Berlin warned Romania against concluding a Little Entente treaty with France, as this would bring her into the same camp with the Soviet Union. Germany promised Romania protection from the claims of Hungary and Bulgaria, urging her to stand guard over "Soviet barbarism" and not to take on new obligations in relation to France and Czechoslovakia. In the spring of 1937, a verbal agreement was actually reached that Romania would not conclude any new agreements that could be interpreted as anti-German and would not allow any foreign army to pass through its territory. For its part, Berlin guaranteed the integrity of the Romanian territory⁶²⁵.

It is clear that during the civil war in Spain, Romania was, in fact, on the side of the Francoists, and the funeral of two volunteers from the Romanian Iron Guard who died in Spain on February 13, 1937

resulted in a solemn review of all anti-democratic forces of the country with the participation of diplomats from Germany, Italy, Poland, Japan and Portugal. The Romanian authorities sabotaged the supply of oil products to Republican Spain, but facilitated the supply to the Francoists, who received 66,278 tons in 1936, and 229,351 tons of oil products in 1937⁶²⁶. Romania banned the sale of weapons to the legitimate government of Spain, but there were no bans for Franco. In April 1937, the Council of the Little Entente rejected Czechoslovakia's proposal to conclude a single mutual assistance treaty between the three countries⁶²⁷. The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs J. Beck, who visited Romania on April 22-25, 1937, urged the Romanian leadership to create a new Little Entente consisting of Romania, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Bulgaria and promised to get Germany to influence Budapest in order to limit Hungarian claims to Bucharest. However, the Romanian leadership was in no hurry to make an unequivocal decision, since France, although not very actively, pointed out the inadmissibility of the pro-German tilt of Bucharest.

On April 28, Romania probed the USSR for the conclusion of a treaty of neutrality in exchange for recognition of the annexation of Bessarabia⁶²⁸. On May 25 in Geneva, in a conversation with Litvinov, Antonescu again spoke of the possibility of signing a Soviet-Romanian treaty of neutrality if the Soviet Union renounced its rights to Bessarabia. It is clear that the Soviet side rejected this proposal⁶²⁹. Occasionally, the Romanian prime minister spoke to the Soviet plenipotentiary in Bucharest about Romania's desire to conclude a mutual assistance treaty with the USSR, but the matter did not go beyond general phrases⁶³⁰. Moreover, the Romanian side considered the recognition by the Soviet Union of the annexation of Bessarabia as an indispensable condition for such an agreement, while Moscow was not going to make such a concession⁶³¹. Meanwhile, incidents on the Dniester continued. So, at 22.50 on April 11, 1937, at the site of the Glinnoye outpost, a shootout took place with 3 unknown persons who crossed the river in a boat, and with the Romanian border guard covering them. On June 10, a local resident R. Ursul was killed by a shot from the Bessarabian coast, and an attack on the Soviet border guard took place near Kamenetz-Podolsk. On August 29, when a Romanian intelligence officer who crossed the river was detained in the Tiraspol region, fire was opened on Soviet border guards from the opposite bank. Despite the persistent efforts of Soviet diplomacy, the Romanian side practically thwarted the investigation of these cases⁶³².

The visit of King Carol II to Poland in July 1937 only confirmed the fact of the revival of the Polish-Romanian anti-Soviet alliance. The Polish side, fulfilling its promise to Germany, continued to persuade Romania to abandon its orientation towards France and Czechoslovakia in the matter of collective security⁶³³. While continuing to assure the Soviet embassy of its readiness to reach an agreement with the USSR, Romania at the same time declared to Poland and Germany that there would be no agreement with Moscow. On July 7-9, 1937, during negotiations between the chiefs of staff of Poland and Romania, an agreement was reached on the preparation of measures to counter the passage of the Red Army to the aid of Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the parties agreed to deploy in the event of war in the east 350,000 Polish and 250,000 Romanian armies, in addition, the Romanian military pledged to increase the number of its troops in Bessarabia and Bukovina in peacetime at the expense of Transylvania. Poland promised to supply Romania with weapons, and Romania promised Poland - fuel and strategic raw materials. It was decided that in the event of the defeat of the USSR, the territories conquered in the east south of the Vinnitsa-Kiev-r. The Desna will go to Romania, and to the north - to Poland. Romania allocated 2 billion lei for the reconstruction and construction of new railways going to the eastern border. The press again launched an anti-Soviet campaign demanding that the issue of Bessarabia be resolved in favor of Romania⁶³⁴. Somewhat later, while in Paris, the Romanian king unequivocally stated that "Russia remains Russia, and any alliances with it, if France tries to impose them on us, we will break"⁶³⁵.

In October 1937, in a conversation with the German envoy in Bucharest, in response to a question about the possibility of a new Franco-Romanian alliance, Antonescu stated that "Romania's line is absolutely clear: no more alliances. Romania intends to develop its friendly relations, for example, with Germany"⁶³⁶. However, in the context of maintaining noticeable economic ties with England, the Romanian leadership was in no hurry with an unequivocal reorientation to Berlin. Bucharest's fear of a new redistribution of borders also served as a significant deterrent. Under these conditions, the best way out of the situation was to be maneuvering between the great European powers. On December 7, 1937, Romania declared to Germany that she was ready for further rapprochement with her. On December 9, a new trade agreement was signed, according to which Romania received German weapons in exchange for oil. "Romania's importance in supplying us with raw materials (food and oil)," the German envoy in Bucharest V. Fabritius reported to Berlin on November 18, "is very great and presents favorable prospects for the future. Economic relations with Germany more and more bind Romania with the Reich politically, which inevitably leads her away from the Eastern policy, which under Titulescu was clothed in friendly relations with Soviet Russia ... As I have repeatedly reported, the expectation of German assistance to Romania more than once expressed by the ruling circles - by the Romanian Prime Minister and other responsible persons"⁶³⁷. Romanian exports to Germany increased from 3.9 billion lei in 1936 to 6.1 billion lei in 1937, while to England it decreased from 3.1 to 2.8 billion lei, respectively⁶³⁸.

At this point, the British leadership decided to intensify the policy of appeasing Germany. In the course of contacts with the German leadership on November 19, 1937, the Lord Chairman of the Royal Privy Council of England, E. Halifax, and on December 2, the British Foreign Minister A. Eden, informed Berlin that London was not against the revision of borders in Eastern Europe, but considered it an indispensable condition to prevent war. Other

In other words, Germany received carte blanche for any actions in Eastern Europe that did not lead to open war. The French leadership actually supported this British position⁶³⁹. Naturally, under these conditions, the German leadership decided to intensify its foreign policy towards its neighbors. In November 1937, at a meeting between Carol II and the President of Czechoslovakia, E. Beneš, the latter was told that "Romania will not interfere in the conflict between Czechoslovakia and Germany"⁶⁴⁰. The visit of French Foreign Minister I. Delbos to Romania in December 1937 showed that Paris, like London, was not against its further rapprochement with Germany. Thus, the question of concluding a pact of mutual assistance between France and the Little Entente was finally eliminated. From the beginning of 1938, Romanian military orders began to be placed in Germany, Italy and Poland, and France refused to guarantee payments to Romania on military orders in Czechoslovakia, which led to their cancellation⁶⁴².

The Czechoslovak Crisis and Romania

On February 10, 1938, a royal dictatorship was established in Romania: on February 11, a state of siege was introduced in the country; On March 31, all political parties were banned, instead of which the National Renaissance Front was created on December 16, finally the government was able to get a fully controlled parliament⁶⁴³. Considering that out of 16 billion lei of foreign investment in Romania, England accounted for 6.7 billion, France - 4.6 billion, the USA - 2.9 billion, Italy - 1.5 billion, and Germany - only 0, 3 billion lei⁶⁴⁴, the Romanian leadership hoped to continue maneuvering between the great European powers. In March 1938, Romania drew the attention of England and France "to the danger that threatens the world as a result of the establishment of a German monopoly in the markets of the countries of the Danube basin and Eastern Europe", but at the same time it was stated that "there can be no question of ousting Germany from these markets, which would be unnatural, apolitical and dangerous. Thus, Bucharest once again demonstrated the need for equal influence of the great powers in the region.

On March 18, 1938, Romania approved the Anschluss of Austria,⁶⁴⁶ but warned Germany against "direct pressure" on Czechoslovakia and reiterated that it wanted close ties with the Third Reich. On March 30, in response to a request from France about the attitude towards the possibility of the passage of Soviet troops to help Czechoslovakia, the Romanian leadership stated that "in the event of a conflict only between Germany and Czechoslovakia, the allied treaties of Romania with Poland and the countries of the Balkan Entente oblige it to remain neutral. If France intervenes in the conflict, then Rumania, although not obliged, would, however, also be disposed to intervene, but would subordinate her intervention to a preliminary agreement with Poland. Romania refuses on principle to allow the passage of Russian troops. However, if Rumania faces a Russian ultimatum, she will never place herself in conditions that could bring her into conflict with France and Czechoslovakia. Thus, Romania tried not to miss any opportunity.

At first, the Eastern European countries declared that in the event of a war they would be on the side of Czechoslovakia. However, already in April 1938 it became clear that there was no unity in the east of Europe. On April 6, Poland protested to Romania in connection with the fact that aircraft purchased by Prague in the USSR flew through its airspace to Czechoslovakia. For its part, Bucharest protested against Czechoslovakia. Referring to these statements, France on May 25 indicated to the USSR that Poland and Romania strongly opposed the passage of Soviet troops⁶⁴⁸. In May, the Romanian leadership faced a choice. Rapprochement with the Soviet Union threatened the activation of social movements in the country. Rapprochement with Germany meant economic enslavement and subjugation. France was not particularly active, and hopes for its support became more and more ephemeral. As a result, it was decided to stake on England, despite the fact that Bucharest already knew that London considers Romania a sphere of influence of Germany⁶⁴⁹.

For its part, Germany continued to tame Bucharest. On April 22, Berlin notified the Romanian government that it had no territorial claims in the Balkans and was ready to guarantee the existing Romanian borders. In response, Bucharest assured Berlin that Romanian policy was not pro-Soviet. The aggravation of the situation around Czechoslovakia affected the policies of all Eastern European countries. On May 4–5, a regular session of the countries of the Little Entente decided that the Sudeten question is an internal affair of Czechoslovakia and should not count on the support of Yugoslavia and Romania in the event of a conflict with Germany. In May, in response to a request from France about Romania's readiness to let the Red Army through to help Czechoslovakia, a statement followed: Bucharest "will never allow this." At the same time, the Rumanian representative in the League of Nations drew the attention of England and France to the fact that trade with them was falling, while with Germany it was growing. However, no clear answer was received from London and Paris. It was brought to the attention of England and France that the presence of the Rumanian-Polish alliance and the Balkan Entente made the issue of allowing Soviet troops to help Czechoslovakia an international problem. In general, the Romanian leadership was keenly following all the zigzags of the German appeasement policy.

On May 30, Romania notified Czechoslovakia that it would not make any statements about the prohibition of the passage of Soviet troops, but this does not mean that it would agree to this. In response, Prague stated that it refers to the possible assistance of the Red Army only in order to force Germany to lower its demands, therefore

she agrees with the Romanian position⁶⁵⁰. Noting the intensification of Romanian-Polish relations and the pro-German tilt of Romania, the Soviet side decided to recall the existence of the unresolved Bessarabian issue. On June 15, the Romanian mission in Moscow was pointed out the unacceptability for the Soviet side of the use in the Romanian notes of the definitions "Romanian territory" in relation to Bessarabia, which "we have never recognized and will not recognize such a territory." The "tacit agreement that both sides will avoid discussion of Bessarabia both in the press and in official speeches" established after the signing of the London Convention implies a certain level of Soviet-Romanian friendship, otherwise there can be no question of the readiness of the USSR silently demolish Romania's claims that Bessarabia belongs to it. On June 18, in a conversation between Litvinov and the Czechoslovak envoy and the French ambassador in Moscow,

the latter stated that the Romanian government was showing "extreme intransigence" on the issue of allowing the passage of Soviet troops, which was explained by Bucharest by the refusal of the USSR to recognize the border along the Dniester. If Moscow agrees to this recognition, then the Romanian government will be able to allow the passage of the Red Army to the aid of Czechoslovakia⁶⁵². It is clear that the Soviet leadership was not going to make such a concession, if only because there were no guarantees of a change in Romanian policy. Meanwhile, Romania began to lean towards the normalization of relations with Hungary, which on June 29 was declared that "in the event that Germany attacks Czechoslovakia from Hungarian territory, the countries of the Little Entente will not threaten Hungary. In the event that Hungarian troops participate in hostilities together with the Germans, the Bucharest and Yugoslav governments will be able to justify their neutrality by saying that an attack on Hungarian territory occupied by the German army will, in essence, be an action not against Hungary, but against Germany. On July 9, Romania reaffirmed its position to France, according to which it rejects any proposals regarding the passage of Soviet troops: "No one can demand from

Romania that she agree in advance to the passage of Soviet troops. Romania knows which side she will be on in case of war. On July 26, Romania declared to Poland that "it would not let a single Soviet soldier through its territory", which Warsaw reported to Berlin⁶⁵⁵. On July 31, 1938, the countries of the Balkan Entente, in violation of the Treaty of Neï, decided to grant Bulgaria equal rights in matters of armaments and at the same time liquidate the demilitarized zones in Greek and Turkish Thrace⁶⁵⁶. On August 13, Romania declared to France that it would "close its eyes" to the overflights of Soviet aircraft at high altitudes, but refused to let the ground forces through⁶⁵⁷. The attempt of the USSR through France to put pressure on Poland and Romania ended in vain, since Paris did not demand from its allies the passage of Soviet troops, but asked them only to report their opinion on this issue. On August 14, Bucharest advised Prague to move closer to Berlin. On August 21–23, the conference of foreign ministers of the Little Entente, in violation of the Treaty of Trianon, decided to recognize the equal rights of Hungary in the issue of armaments⁶⁵⁹.

On September 2, Litvinov told the French chargé d'affaires in Moscow that the decision of the League of Nations to recognize Czechoslovakia as a victim of aggression could push Poland and Romania to allow the passage of Soviet troops⁶⁶⁰. However, the Czechoslovak question was not raised in the League of Nations, and Czechoslovakia itself did not turn to either the USSR or Romania for help. On September 8, Bucharest officially denied reports spread in the European press about the conclusion of a Soviet-Romanian agreement on the passage of troops and the transit of military cargo from the USSR to Czechoslovakia. On the same day, Romania told France that if the West received the consent of Poland, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia to let the Soviet troops through, then Bucharest would also discuss this issue. However, the transport network of Transcarpathia is not very developed, so the transfer of troops is doubtful. In response, France thanked Carol II for "Romania's valuable contribution to the peace action of the great powers"⁶⁶¹.

Officially, neither France, nor England, nor Czechoslovakia asked Romania to let the Soviet troops through. This spared Bucharest the need for any clear statement. Nevertheless, on September 11, Romania told France that "the Romanian government cannot allow the passage of Russian troops through its territory, and the recommendation of the Council of the League of Nations will not be able to change our decision," which follows from the agreements with Yugoslavia and Poland. "If the Russians try to get through, Romania, with the support of Poland, will defend itself"⁶⁶². Of course, in conversations with Soviet diplomats, the Romanians were more circumspect - they referred to the desire to maintain neutrality. On September 11, France informed the USSR that "Romania cannot let the Red Army through, but that if Soviet planes fly high over Romania, they will not be seen"⁶⁶³.

On September 16, it became clear that Poland was on the side of Hungary, and Warsaw did not take into account the interests of Romania. On September 17, Bucharest again denied rumors about the transportation of military materials from the USSR to Czechoslovakia through Romanian territory. On September 21, Germany declared to Romania that it was satisfied with its position "regarding the possibility of the passage of Russian troops and its wish for close Romanian-German cooperation" and was disposed to resolve the Romanian-Hungarian disputes in favor of Bucharest. In exchange for a guarantee against Hungarian claims, Germany demanded that Yugoslavia and Romania remain neutral in the Sudeten question. On the same day, Hungary put forward its claims to the territory of Czechoslovakia, and Prague asked Belgrade and Bucharest about their position in the event of Hungarian assistance to Germany.

offered Romania to negotiate with Hungary. In this situation, Yugoslavia and Romania were in no hurry to clearly define their position, although on September 25 both countries agreed that it was necessary to remain neutral and wait for the decisions of England and France⁶⁶⁵. On September 23, it was brought to the attention of

Berlin through Rome that, despite "the strongest pressure", Bucharest "refused, refuses and will refuse to satisfy such a demand in the future" about the passage of Soviet troops in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia⁶⁶⁶. In the event of an aggravation of Soviet-Polish relations, "Romania will be on the side of Warsaw" and that "in any case, an alliance with Poland will take precedence over obligations regarding Prague"⁶⁶⁷. At the same time, Romania declared that it was against the satisfaction of the Hungarian demands on Czechoslovakia. Having coordinated its position with Yugoslavia, Bucharest on September 26 turned to Germany with a request to moderate Hungary's appetites. "Germany solemnly declared to us that we can count on her assistance if we do not enter into some kind of combination directed against the Reich (there are repeated statements by Hitler and Goering about this). Romania refrained from any action that could be considered hostile to the Reich. Now we have the right to expect that Germany, too, will fulfill the promises she made. In response, Goering said on September 28 that if Romania and Yugoslavia did not interfere in the future, then Hungary would have a "deterrent effect." On September 27, it was brought to the attention of Germany that Romania would try to convince Czechoslovakia to resolve the conflict in favor of the Germans. At the same time, Prague was required to satisfy Polish claims.

During the September crisis of 1938, Czechoslovakia, Germany, France, Poland and the USSR took a number of measures to increase the combat readiness of their armed forces⁶⁶⁹. In particular, on September 21–23, People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR Marshal K.E. Voroshilov ordered the command of the Kalinin (KaVO), Belarusian Special (BOVO) and Kyiv Special Military Districts (KOVO) to put on alert and concentrate troops near the border in order to conduct "major exercises." On September 25, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks allowed the People's Commissar of Defense "without stopping" construction work on fortified areas, to carry out the following measures: parts of the fortified areas of the LVO, BOVO, KOVO, with the exception of the rear Kiev fortified area and fortified areas located along the river. Dniester.

In total, for parts of the fortified areas, call on 54,000 people. With replenished units, conduct enhanced exercises to fill the structures with ammunition, bring equipment to combat readiness and combat firing, using part of the time to clear the view and shelling, install a barbed wire net and set up anti-tank obstacles.

b) Give an order to install weapons and load all military installations with ammunition
fortified areas. 2. Call for

assigned staff for: a) 13, 2, 100 (Minsk region) and 4 sd (Slutsk) BOVO in the amount of 4,000 people. for each division. b) 96, 97 and 72 RD KOVO, relocated to the state border, 3,000 people each. for each division. In total, for rifle units, call on 25,000 people.

3. Raise the system of air surveillance and communication posts (VNOS) LVO, BOVO, KOVO, MVO, HVO, especially in large air defense points, calling for assigned staff.

Call on the assigned staff of the 1st and 2nd air defense corps (Leningrad and Moscow) and air defense units of Kyiv, as well as the anti-aircraft divisions of the High Command Reserve in BOVO and KOVO.

To raise VNOS units and for air defense units, call on 39,000 people. 4. Call for assigned staff for artillery units of the High Command of the LVO, BOVO, KOVO, HVO, MVO, OrVO, a total of 49,000 people.

In total, 167,000 people will be called up for the listed events. In addition, to allow the call for an appropriate number of horses, cars and tractors"⁶⁷⁰. On September 27, the People's Commissar of Defense was allowed to attract 4,500 artillery horses, 1,175 trucks and 190 cars, as well as 700 caterpillar tractors to training camps in the LVO, BOVO, KOVO, MVO and KhVO. On September 29, the Politburo approved the following proposal by Voroshilov: "A. To call from the reserve assigned people of the LVO, BOVO, KOVO: 1. To all air bases, in total - 30,000 people. 2. In all tank brigades, in total - 39,000 people. 3. For 4,000 people. in the following divisions: LVO - 70 rifle division Karelian fortified. area. 90 sd Karelian fort. area. 11 sd Kingisepp fortified. area. 56 sd Pskov fortified. area. CaVO - 67th division Sebezh. BOVO - 50 and 5 sd, nominated for state. border near Polotsk. 27 sd Lepel. 52 sd Mozyr fortified. area.

KOVO - 60 sd Ovruch. 45,
44, 46 and 81 rifle divisions - Novograd-Volynsk region, Shepetovka. 1
joint venture 7 sd, inviting 8,000 people to
it. 99 and 95 sd, stationed in the Transnistrian fortifications. areas, with their concentration in the area of Kamenetz-Podolsk, Mogilev-Podolsk.
In total, to call for rifle divisions 72,000
people. B. To call on the training camp the entire command and
command staff of the combat units of the LVO, BOVO, KOVO and KalVO.

C. To call for training the command staff of the headquarters of rifle divisions and regiments in the Moscow Military District, KhVO, PriVO, UrVO,
KalVO, OrVO and SKVO. In
total, call on the command staff of 39,000 people. To
carry out these activities, call for a total of 180,000 people. D. To supply 22,000 horses to the Red
Army for rifle divisions at the rate of harnessing all artillery
guns of these divisions.

Take for the Red Army from the national economy 3,400 trucks, based on 25% of the mobilization requirement: for air bases - 1,500 trucks; for
the tank. parts - 1,250 vehicles; for
building parts - 650 machines. D. In
order to strengthen the headquarters
of the districts and army groups, immediately send students of the 3rd year of the Academy. Frunze and the 2nd year of the Academy of the
General Staff for practice in the operational departments of the headquarters: LVO, KalVO, BOVO, KOVO, HVO, SKVO and army groups of BOVO
and KOVO "672 .

Meanwhile, a number of formations of the Red Army were concentrated on the western border of the USSR. In KalVO, the 67th Infantry Division
advanced to the Sebezh region, and air defense points were deployed in Velikiye Luki and Sebezh. In BOVO, in the area of Sarya, Vetrino,
Berezno, Begoml, formations of the Vitebsk Army Group (AG) were deployed (commander - Divisional Commander F.I. Kuznetsov). In the area
north of Pleschenitsa, Zaslavl, Minsk, Dzerzhinsk, Uzda, Timkovich, Semezhovo, the troops of the Bobruisk AG (commander - brigade commander
V.I. Chuikov) concentrated, exercises of the 4th Rifle began in the Slutsk area, and in the lower reaches of the Ptich and Ubort rivers west of Mozyr
- 52nd Rifle Division. In Slutsk, Bobruisk, Zhlobin, Pukhovichi, Mogilev, Minsk, Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk and Polotsk, air defense points were
deployed and the Polotsk, Minsk and Mozyr URs were put on alert. In KOVO, the 60th Infantry Division conducted exercises in the Ovruch area,
the 7th Infantry Division in the Chernihiv area, and the main forces of the Zhytomyr AG (commander - Divisional Commander F.N. Remezov)
deployed in the area of Novograd-Volynsky, Yampol, Shepetovka, Baranovka . The troops of the Vinnitsa AG (commander - commander P.S.
Ivanov) concentrated in the area of Volochisk, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Yarmolinty. The 99th Rifle Division deployed in the area of Gaisin, Vapnyarka,
occupying Mogilev-Yampolsky UR with one regiment, and the 95th Rifle Division deployed in the area of Kotovsk, Balta, Ananiev. In Zhmerinka,
Kazatin, Proskurov, Kiev, Shepetovka, air defense points were deployed and Korostensky, Novograd-Volynsky, Letichevsky, Mogilev-Yampolsky,
Rybnitsky and Tiraspol'sky URs were put on alert. According to incomplete data, these troops numbered 269,270 men, 86,497 horses, 2,279 guns,
and 2,055 tanks (see Table 2)673 .

Table 2 **Number of troops deployed on the western border at the end of September 1938**

Армейские группы	Корпуса	Дивизии, бригады	Личный состав	Лошади	Орудия	Танки
		67-я СД	7 605	2 374	71	32
		Войска ПВО	?	?	24	—
	Итого КапВО		7 605	2 374	95	32
Витебская АГ	4-й СК	5-я СД	7 764	1 638	33	29
		50-я СД	7 728	1 354	14	23
		18-я тбр	1 501	—	—	160
		24-я КД	4 447	4 325	52	27
		27-я СД	7 365	1 163	88	—
		16-я тбр	1 469	—	11	131
	Полоцкий УР		7 020	—	82	—
	Итого		37 294	8 480	280	370
Бобруйская АГ	16-й СК	2-я СД	7 991	2 415	37	22
		13-я СД	10 447	1 961	78	16
		100-я СД	7 514	2 135	70	13
		21-я тбр	2 316	—	6	149
	3-я КК	4-я КД	4 472	4 205	23	28
		7-я КД	3 249	3 387	21	39
		36-я КД	3 705	3 645	21	30
	Итого		39 694	17 748	256	297
		4-я СД	8 001	2 091	67	42
		52-я СД	9 809	98	34	—
		Итого	17 810	2 189	101	42
		Войска ПВО	?	?	204	—
	Итого БОВО		94 798	28 417	841	709
Армейские группы	Корпуса	Дивизии, бригады	Личный состав	Лошади	Орудия	Танки
		95-я СД	10 244	3 046	75	78
		99-я СД	8 813	3 113	70	38
		Итого	19 057	6 159	145	116
		Артиллерия РГК	10 372	—	161	—
		Войска ПВО	8 198 + ?	26 + ?	177	—
	Итого КОВО		166 867	55 706	1 343	1 314

In total, in the Red Army at the end of September - beginning of October 1938, 328,762 people were called up from the reserve (commander political staff - 34,607 and junior commanding officers and rank and file - 294,155), 27,550 horses and 4,759 vehicles (including 551 tractors), who were demobilized in accordance with the decision of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks of October 16, 1938.

In the meantime, on September 29-30, during the conference of England, France, Germany and Italy in Munich, an agreement was worked out on the Czechoslovak question, which satisfied all the claims of the Third Reich. It was decided to transfer the border regions of Czechoslovakia to Germany before October 10. The right of the population of the transferred areas to opt was proclaimed, but not implemented. The proclaimed international guarantees were never formalized, because England evaded it⁶⁷⁵. At the same time, on September 30, England and Germany signed a non-aggression agreement and consultations. In addition, the right of Poland and Hungary to a territorial settlement with Czechoslovakia was recognized. By signing the Munich Agreement, France violated the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty of 21 January 1924 and the Treaty of Locarno of 16 October 1925. to lose⁶⁷⁶. According to Yugoslavia and Romania, the acceptance of the Munich Agreement by Czechoslovakia violated its obligations under the agreement of February 16, 1933 and testified to the cessation of the existence of the Little Entente⁶⁷⁷.

The Munich Agreement led Romania to also decide to improve its relations with Germany. Already on September 29, the German envoy in Romania reported to Berlin that the king would like to establish closer relations with Germany and get support against the "Russian invasion". However, Germany did not want to give any written territorial guarantees, not wanting to worsen its relations with Hungary and Bulgaria. In addition, now that the need for a barrier against the Red Army had disappeared, the German leadership again began to insist on obtaining evidence from Bucharest that it "would not turn out to be an adversary either due to ties with the League of Nations, or through any combination or system of alliances" and demand economic concessions. Having put forward an ultimatum to Prague on September 30 regarding the transfer of Teszyn to Poland, Warsaw asked Bucharest to influence Czechoslovakia in the sense of satisfying this demand. The next day, Bucharest asked Prague to do "everything possible in the interests of peace."

However, Hungary's demand to speed up negotiations with Czechoslovakia on resolving the issue of the Hungarian national minority caused discontent in Yugoslavia and Romania, which declared to England, Italy, German

Poland about the need to limit Hungarian claims. Then Poland decided to influence Romania and on October 19 offered her to also participate in the partition of Czechoslovakia, but the Romanian government hoped to maintain contact with Germany through Transcarpathia, which remained under the control of Prague, and refused⁶⁷⁹. On October 28, this opinion of the Romanian government, which was in line with Germany's intentions, was brought to the attention of Berlin. On November 2, the first Vienna arbitration transferred to Hungary only the southern regions of Slovakia and Transcarpathian Ukraine⁶⁸⁰. On November 5, in a conversation with the Yugoslav regent Paul Karol II, he admitted that the position of Poland and Romania was an obstacle in organizing assistance from the USSR to Czechoslovakia, but most of all both sides were worried about the problem of a new balance of power in Europe. Is it necessary to take into account the possible support of England and France,

or will it be necessary to focus on Germany and Italy? There was no clarity on this issue. By the autumn of 1938, practically the entire Romanian elite agreed to look up to Germany⁶⁸². According to the king, "he would rather see the Germans as his enemies than the Russians as his friends"⁶⁸³. Trying to find a counterbalance to the new economic demands of Germany, Carol II visited England and France on November 15-21, 1938, trying to obtain loans for the purchase of weapons. England agreed to the provision of 25 million pounds. Art. as a trade credit, but the king was told that London supported the Romanian-German rapprochement, because it did not want to "create the impression that Great Britain is trying to put up a barrier to German expansion to the East." A similar position was taken by France, which began leisurely economic negotiations with Romania⁶⁸⁴. Returning to his homeland through Germany, on November 24 and 26, Carol II met with Hitler and Goering, to whom he, pointing to the existence of "good relations with the German Reich", proposed "systematic cooperation in the development of economic relations" based on the development of a long-term agreement on trade for 5-10 years. It is clear that the king emphasized the anti-Soviet nature of Romania's foreign policy and the fact that the Polish-Romanian alliance was "directed exclusively against Russia"⁶⁸⁵. In the meantime, an Iron Guard putsch took place in Romania, which was suppressed by the Romanian authorities. On November 30, according to Romanian newspapers, C. Codreanu and 13 other leaders of this organization, who were imprisoned, were killed "while trying to escape." The German press sharply criticized this step of the Romanian government, the German envoy was recalled from Bucharest "for a report", and Berlin declared that a German-Romanian political agreement was impossible.

The aggravation of Romanian-German relations coincided with the signing on December 6 of the Franco-German declaration of non-aggression⁶⁸⁷. Under these conditions, the Romanian leadership saw a way out in new concessions to Berlin. As a result, already on December 10, a new trade agreement favorable for Germany for 1939 was concluded, which brought its share in Romanian imports to 45% (in 1937 it was 28.9%)⁶⁸⁸. At the same time, the Crown Council decided on December 14, along with measures to improve relations with Germany, to take steps to maintain ties with England and France. In January 1939, Romania offered Germany negotiations for a long-term economic agreement, which began on 13 February. During the negotiations, it became clear that although Romania was ready for broad economic cooperation with the Third Reich, Bucharest also did not forget about its interests⁶⁸⁹. Through diplomatic channels, Romania informed England about the progress of the negotiations, but London took a wait-and-see attitude. On February 22, the draft agreement was basically agreed upon, but for various reasons the parties were in no hurry to sign it⁶⁹⁰. On February 25, Romania notified Germany that the Little Entente no longer existed, and the Balkan Entente was in no way directed against Germany. In February 1939, Hungary joined the Anti-Comintern Pact, and the USSR broke off diplomatic relations with it, which caused a joyful revival in Bucharest⁶⁹².

Romania, the USSR and the political crisis of 1939

Knowing from their intelligence about the preparations for the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, the Western countries participating in the Munich Agreement did not provide for any countermeasures. On March 13, England notified its diplomatic missions abroad that it would not take the initiative of any anti-German steps in the event of German action against Prague⁶⁹³. On March 14, Slovakia, under pressure from Germany, declared independence, and the President of Czechoslovakia, E. Hacha, left for Berlin, where, during the "negotiations," he agreed to the political reorganization of his country. On the same day, with the approval of Germany, Hungary moved troops into the Transcarpathian Ukraine, whose government offered Romania to send troops. However, Bucharest refused this proposal, by March 17, Transcarpathia was occupied by the Hungarian army, and Romanian-Hungarian relations escalated. On March 15, German troops entered the Czech Republic, on whose territory the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was created. Initially, the reaction of England and France was rather restrained, but as public opinion aroused, London and Paris toughened their position and on March 18, like the USSR, they protested the actions of Germany, and the English and French ambassadors were recalled from Berlin "for consultations".

In the meantime, German-Romanian economic negotiations resumed on March 10, and by March 16 the agreement was finally agreed, but its signing was postponed by the Romanian side under various pretexts. In the meantime, Anglophile circles in Romania tried to intensify economic ties with England, but London showed no interest in these proposals, since at that time England itself was conducting economic negotiations with Germany. During these negotiations in Düsseldorf on March 15, an agreement was signed that made it possible to change the cartel structure of the world in favor of the Anglo-German monopolies, and the refusal of the United States to join it could cause joint responses from England and

Germany. On March 11, 1939, France also proposed to Germany that an extensive economic agreement be concluded .

On March 16, the Romanian envoy in London, V. Tilya, visited the Foreign Office and stated that Germany had practically given Romania an ultimatum demanding that it be granted special economic and political rights in Romania. Therefore, he would like to know how much the Romanian government "can count on Great Britain if a real threat hangs over Romania from Germany ... Will the British government be ready to do the same for Romania as for Turkey", which shortly before This was granted loans for the purchase of weapons. On March 17, in the same spirit, Tilya spoke with the British Foreign Minister E. Halifax, proposing the creation of an anti-German front from Romania, Poland, Yugoslavia, Turkey and Greece under the auspices of England and France. Actually, it is still unknown whether this demarche of Thiel was an official or private matter⁶⁹⁵ .

Be that as it may, on March 17, England asked Paris, Bucharest, Warsaw, Belgrade, Ankara and Athens about their attitude to the ongoing events. The next day, London also asked Moscow, "can Romania count on the help of the USSR in the event of German aggression and in what form, in what amounts"⁶⁹⁶. In response, the Soviet side proposed holding a conference with the participation of the USSR, Britain, France, Poland, Romania and Turkey to discuss the situation⁶⁹⁷. On March 18, the Romanian government stated that it did not authorize Thiel to make such statements and "at the moment there is no threat to the political or economic independence of Romania", although this denial was made at the request of the German envoy in Bucharest⁶⁹⁸. Actually, the Romanian envoy in Moscow, in a conversation with Litvinov on March 19, also denied the fact of the German ultimatum⁶⁹⁹. On March 20, it became known in Moscow that the Romanian ambassador to France also denied the existence of an ultimatum from Germany, but raised the question of French assistance to Romania. The French side pointed to the need for a collective action in support of Bucharest with the participation of the USSR. To this, the ambassador replied that "involvement of the USSR should be approached 'with extreme caution'", although the Romanian side is not against Soviet assistance⁷⁰⁰ .

On March 19, England declared that the convening of the conference proposed by Moscow was premature, and on March 21 it put forward a counterproposal to sign an Anglo-French-Soviet-Polish declaration on consultations in the event of aggression. While it was being discussed, on March 23, 1939, German troops entered Klaipeda (Memel) and an agreement was signed "On strengthening economic ties between Romania and Germany." Rumanian ruling circles believed that "the conclusion of a convention with Germany is a decisive step in the direction of our future policy"⁷⁰². On the same day, British Prime Minister N. Chamberlain declared that England "has no desire ... to oppose Germany's understandable efforts to expand its export trade" and it does not intend to "isolate Germany or stand in the way of its natural and legitimate commercial expansion into the Central and South Eastern Europe. For its part, Rumania told England that at the moment there was no immediate danger of attack for her, although Hungary and Germany were concentrating troops along the Romanian border and in Slovakia. Not wanting to provoke Berlin by concluding a military alliance with the Western powers, the Rumanian government would like Britain and France to declare on their own initiative their determination to defend Romania's existing borders. Bucharest continued to oppose the general pact of mutual assistance and even more so against the participation of the Soviet Union in it .

In the meantime, on March 22, a TASS message was published, which refuted rumors about offers of Soviet assistance to Warsaw and Bucharest in the event of aggression against them, since "neither Poland nor Romania turned to the Soviet government for help and about any danger threatening them informed"⁷⁰⁵. On March 26, the Romanian envoy to the USSR informed the NKID of the main provisions of the concluded Romanian-German agreement, which "does not limit the sovereign rights of Romania either in the economic or in the political field. It does not create for Germany and no monopoly rights whatsoever in Rumania." Bucharest is ready for similar agreements with other countries. On his own behalf, the envoy added that it is possible that the agreement "is only the first step on the part of Germany, on which it may not stop. We were forced to agree to this agreement in order not to find ourselves eye to eye with Germany, irritated by our refusal. After all, no one has yet wanted to support us - neither France, nor England, nor the USSR. From the Soviet side, the Romanian diplomat was informed about the progress of the discussion of the declaration proposed by England⁷⁰⁶ . On March 27, Bucharest received an English offer of assistance, conditioned on the

conclusion of a Polish-Romanian mutual assistance treaty against Germany, but the Romanian government declared that it could not sign such a treaty "without consulting the countries of the Balkan Entente" and did not have "great confidence" in Poland, which inclined to negotiate with Germany⁷⁰⁷. On March 29, it became clear that Poland and Romania did not want to sign the declaration proposed by Britain if it was signed by the Soviet representative. In turn, Moscow, fearing to push Warsaw into the arms of Berlin, was not going to sign this document without the participation of Poland⁷⁰⁸. Thus, England faced the problem of how to ensure the involvement of the USSR in solving issues of European politics, which it had previously invariably rejected, at a time when many countries, whose opinion London tried to take into account, did not approve of flirting with Moscow. As a result, by the end of March, the issue of a declaration was dropped, and the above problem was again postponed to the future⁷⁰⁹ .

On March 29, Litvinov pointed out to the Romanian envoy in Moscow that the Soviet side was interested in

more detailed information about the Romanian-German agreement, "if any other secret agreement has been signed." In response, the Romanian diplomat stated that "the agreement with Germany is purely economic", although the danger of German pressure exists and can be eliminated "only by joint actions of the great powers." The Soviet side was again hinted at the desirability of recognizing the border along the Dniester, to which Litvinov replied that "no danger threatens this line"⁷¹⁰.

Meanwhile, German-Polish relations escalated. Under these conditions, fearing a possible transition of Poland into the camp of Germany, trying to get her consent to guarantee the borders of Romania and restrain German expansion, England agreed to unilateral guarantees of Poland's independence. Despite Warsaw's requests to keep them secret, on March 31 the guarantees were published, but at the same time England did not refuse to promote the German-Polish settlement. Nevertheless, Poland still refused to guarantee the borders of Romania, not wanting to spoil relations with Hungary and believing that Western support would allow further maneuvering between Berlin and Moscow. At the same time, Warsaw offered England to conclude an Anglo-

French-Polish alliance treaty⁷¹¹. On April 1, Moscow notified London that, since the question of a declaration was dropped, "we consider ourselves free from any obligations." When asked whether the USSR intended to continue to help the victims of aggression, the answer was given, "that maybe we will help in certain cases, but that we consider ourselves not bound by anything and will act in accordance with our interests"⁷¹². On April 4, while orienting the Soviet plenipotentiary in Germany about the general principles of Soviet policy, Litvinov noted that "it is impossible to delay and stop aggression in Europe without us, and the later they turn to us for our help, the more we will be paid"⁷¹³. On April 11, in a letter to the Soviet plenipotentiary in France, Litvinov noted that England and France were striving to obtain from the USSR a unilateral obligation to defend Poland and Romania, believing that the support of these countries was in the Soviet interests. "But we ourselves will always be aware of our interests and will do what they dictate to us. Why should we pledge ourselves in advance, without deriving absolutely any benefit from these obligations for ourselves?"

In this situation, France accelerated the completion of trade negotiations with Romania that had been dragging on since November 1938, and on March 31, a Franco-Romanian economic agreement was concluded. Romania was given a loan of 500 million francs for the purchase of weapons and other goods, which was provided by Romanian supplies of oil and grain. Having learned about the guarantees to Poland, Romania tried to get guarantees of its borders from England and France, but London again repeated its conditions. Then the Romanian government decided to refer to the existing treaty with Poland, which is applicable to any aggression, "although the technical agreements provided only for the case of Russian aggression." Wanting to receive significant military support from England and France, Romania did not want to bind itself with an anti-German agreement, spoke out against the rapprochement of England, France and Poland with the USSR and did not want to cooperate with Moscow. Meanwhile, Italy occupied Albania on 7–10 April. As a result, on April 13, England and France provided guarantees for the independence of Romania and Greece. On April 14, Bucharest notified Berlin that "Romania will not join the British policy of encircling Germany" and that "military assistance from the USSR is undesirable" for her⁷¹⁶. On April 17, Poland and Romania confirmed that their alliance treaty was directed only against the USSR⁷¹⁷.

During a visit to Berlin on April 18–19, 1939, the Romanian Foreign Minister G. Gafencu reassured Hitler, assuring him that the Anglo-French guarantees had no real force and were more directed against Romania's immediate neighbors, and not against Germany. In any case, "Romania is ready to sincerely cooperate", loyally fulfill the economic agreement with Germany, has no obligations towards England and France, will in no case contribute to the English "encirclement" of Germany and will not take part in any diplomatic combination with the participation of THE USSR. For his part, Hitler warned Romania against rapprochement with Moscow. On April 23–26 in London, Gafencu convinced the British leadership that Germany did not want war and was striving for an agreement with England. "Romanian friendship with France and Great Britain does not bother Germany, since this friendship provides Romania with the opportunity to take firm anti-Russian positions." The Romanian minister again spoke out against cooperation with the USSR, contacts with which should have been used to put pressure on Germany. During the London talks, the issue of strengthening the Balkan Entente by bringing Bulgaria into its composition was raised, for which, in the opinion of the British side, southern Dobruja should probably have been transferred to it. In any case, London was satisfied with the neutral position of the Balkan countries. Later, in Paris, Gafencu supported the British position regarding negotiations with the USSR⁷¹⁹. On May 11, an Anglo-Romanian agreement was signed to increase trade. In July 1939 an agreement was reached that England would lend Rumania £5,612,300. Art. for the purchase of weapons and military equipment. This clearly showed the interest of the great powers of Europe in the widest possible use of the Romanian export of raw materials⁷²⁰.

Meanwhile, on April 11, England asked the USSR about the form in which it "could provide assistance to Romania in the event of an attack by Germany." True, it immediately became clear that Bucharest was generally not inclined to cooperate with the USSR, fearing countermeasures from Berlin⁷²¹. On April 14, Moscow, declaring its readiness to participate in a collective action in support of Bucharest, asked London about how the Engli

the government "thinks of forms of assistance to Romania." But there was no clear answer from England, as London sought to ensure that the USSR assumed unilateral obligations with respect to its western neighbors⁷²². It is clear that Moscow was not going to play this game, and in response, on April 17, England and France were asked to conclude an agreement on mutual assistance ⁷²³. Now it turned out that England was in no hurry to implement this idea.

Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V.P. On May 8, Potemkin had a protocol conversation with Gafencu in Bucharest, assuring him that the replacement of Litvinov as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V.M. Molotov will not affect Moscow's foreign policy strategy. Asked by Potemkin if the time had not come to "reconsider the Polish-Romanian pact directed against the USSR", Gafencu replied that "nothing prevents the conclusion" of a Romanian-Polish agreement on mutual assistance "in the event of an attack from the West"⁷²⁴. It is clear that Bucharest did not oblige such a response to anything. On the same day, Romania notified Germany that she "firmly rejected" all proposals to involve her in negotiations with the USSR from the very beginning. Moscow's attempt to liquidate the Polish-Romanian treaty of 1921, or at least extend its effect to Germany, aroused categorical objections from Poland and Romania⁷²⁶.

Both countries in every possible way refused any agreements directed against Germany, and generally opposed collective security. Romania faithfully fulfilled its promise made on April 19 to Hitler not to conclude "no alliances against Germany" and not to have "no business with the Soviet Union". It is clear that Britain, at every opportunity, referred to the similar position of Warsaw and Bucharest in order to limit its obligations towards the USSR⁷²⁸. It is no coincidence that Gafencu was advised in London not to hide too much his unwillingness to cooperate with Moscow. Moreover, this position of Romania was also used by England to put pressure on France. On May 23, the Rumanian government again brought to the attention of England that "Romania does not wish to take part in any system involving assistance from the Soviet Union" and "does not want to go along with England and France in their negotiations with the Soviets." Even earlier, the same was reported to Germany. However, this position was not hidden from Moscow either, which was told that "the Romanian government will not take part either in an alliance [with the USSR] or in negotiations about it. Romania cannot associate itself ... with Russia"⁷²⁹.

In the conditions of the political crisis of 1939, the Soviet leadership was interested in accurately determining the positions of both the great European powers and their Western neighbors. Of course, the main attention of the USSR at that time was given to contacts with England, France and Germany. Moscow noted that the position of England and France in relation to Germany is gradually softening. If in March-April the Western allies made statements threatening Germany, then in the first half of May they only demonstrated calm confidence in their abilities, and by the beginning of June they called on Berlin to negotiate. Poland and Romania also showed no desire to cooperate with Moscow. The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations on a mutual assistance treaty that had begun developed neither shaky nor roll, since England and France were not going to recognize the equality of the USSR in European affairs, fearing that the creation of a real anti-German coalition would lead to the collapse of the Nazi regime in Germany and the fascist regime in Italy and "Bolshevization" of these countries. Therefore, all these diplomatic steps of the Western allies in relation to Moscow were aimed only at intimidating Germany and reaching an agreement with her⁷³⁰.

On June 1, Bucharest reminded London of its request that "Romania not be mentioned in any Anglo-Russian agreement"⁷³¹. On May 13 and July 20, new German-Romanian economic agreements were signed on the supply of timber and agricultural products to the Third Reich. At the beginning of July 1939, Romania concluded loan contracts in Germany for the supply of weapons, guaranteeing Berlin an uninterrupted supply of fuel. In July, Romania reaffirmed that "at the present time we do not intend to enter into either direct or indirect relations with the Russians"⁷³². However, on July 22, the Wehrmacht's High Command imposed a ban or limited the supply of weapons on credit to countries that "took part in the British policy of encircling Germany." Now Romania could receive weapons only in exchange for oil. Then Bucharest banned the supply of oil to Germany on account of clearing, since the Romanian obligations had already been fulfilled. After negotiations on August 19, it was possible to agree on the resumption of Romanian supplies. The Romanian government agreed to pay 5.5 million marks to foreign companies for oil for Germany, and the German side promised to supply the Romanian Air Force with 29 bombers and lift the ban on the supply of Czech weapons⁷³³.

Meanwhile, new incidents took place on the Dniester. On May 11, a Romanian border boat fired on and captured a fishing boat in the Soviet part of the Dniester Estuary. Although the boat and the fishermen were returned the next day, a joint investigation of this case showed that, although the fact of violation of Soviet territorial waters, shelling and capture of fishermen was confirmed, "Romanians took a sharply negative position on this issue." On May 31, during a meeting of representatives of the border units, the Romanian side tried to use in the protocol instead of the words "demarcation" the word "border" and the phrases "Soviet territory", "Romanian territory". As a result, the protocol was not signed by the Soviet representative. The Main Directorate of Border Troops (GUPV) of the NKVD asked the NKID to solve this problem through diplomatic channels⁷³⁴. On June 28, the Soviet side pointed out to the Romanian mission in Moscow that in its note of June 7, the term "Romanian territory" was again allowed in relation to Bessarabia. The Romanian envoy stated that "in the future, the mission will refrain from using unacceptable words in correspondence with the NKID"

for the Soviet side of the formulations⁷³⁵. Accordingly, on July 21, the Soviet embassy in Bucharest received instructions from Moscow not to accept Romanian documents with such wording.

In the course of secret and overt Anglo-German contacts in the spring and summer of 1939, London tried to reach an agreement with Germany that would allow Europe to be consolidated, while Berlin tried to obtain guarantees of British non-interference in the affairs of Eastern Europe. Naturally, the USSR closely followed the maneuvers of London and Berlin and tried by its countermeasures to prevent a new Anglo-German agreement, rightly regarding it as the main threat to its interests. In the spring and summer of 1939, England and France again tried to find an acceptable basis for an agreement with Germany, using the threat of rapprochement with the USSR to put pressure on Berlin. However, it was quite obvious that they did not burn with the desire to have Moscow as an equal partner - this completely contradicted their foreign policy strategy. It was no coincidence that at the end of July England brought to the attention of Germany that negotiations with other countries "are only a reserve means for a genuine reconciliation with Germany and that these ties will disappear as soon as the only important and worthy goal, an agreement with Germany, has really been achieved"⁷³⁸. It is clear that under these conditions, as the talks in Moscow showed, Britain and France were not going to agree that the Soviet Union, along with them, would have the right to determine when Germany acts as an aggressor. This is precisely what explained the fruitless discussion on the question of the definition of "indirect aggression". As a result of mutual suspicion and intransigence of the parties, the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations by mid-July failed.

However, an open recognition of this fact would deprive England and the USSR of a means of pressure on Germany, so on July 23 London and Paris agreed to the military negotiations proposed by the Soviet side. It is no coincidence that the composition of the Anglo-French military delegations was not very representative, and their instructions provided that "before the conclusion of a political agreement, the delegation should ... negotiate very slowly, following the development of political negotiations"⁷³⁹. Knowing that "the Poles and Romanians do not want to allow Soviet troops into their territory," it was still necessary to develop plans for assistance from the USSR to Poland and Romania, whose position could change in the event of German aggression. "If the Russians demand that the French and British governments make Poland and Rumania" an offer of cooperation with the Soviet Union, "the delegation should not assume any obligations," reporting this to London. "The Poles and Romanians did not provide a coordinated defense of their countries against the German attack, since in the past the Polish-Romanian alliance was guided only by the assumption of an attack from Russia," and the Romanian armed forces, consisting of 22 infantry, 3 cavalry divisions and 3 mountain infantry brigades, are of no significant value. The main task of the delegation was seen as obtaining a promise from Moscow to economically support Poland and Romania in the event of war⁷⁴⁰.

Still hoping to reach an agreement with Germany, the British government did not want, as a result of negotiations with the USSR, "to be drawn into any definite obligation that could tie our hands under any circumstances. Therefore, with regard to a military agreement, one should strive to be limited to the most general formulations possible"⁷⁴¹. It is no coincidence that the French delegation had powers only to conduct negotiations, while the British delegation had no written powers at all. Thus, for the Anglo-French side, it was about conducting fruitless negotiations, which it was desirable to drag out for the longest possible time, which, in the opinion of London and Paris, could keep Germany from starting a war in 1939 and hinder a possible Soviet-German rapprochement⁷⁴³. For its part, the Soviet leadership, being generally aware of such intentions of England and France, appointed a representative

military delegation with all possible powers. Options for a military agreement were developed that could be safely offered to partners without fear that they would be accepted. On August 7, a clear "scenario" for conducting military negotiations was developed. First of all, it was necessary to find out the powers of the parties "to sign a military convention." "If they do not have the authority to sign the convention, express surprise, shrug their shoulders and "respectfully" ask for what purpose the government sent them to the USSR. If they answered that they were sent for negotiations, then their views on the joint actions of England, France and the USSR in the war should have been clarified. If the negotiations did start, they should have been "reduced to a discussion on certain fundamental issues, mainly about the passage of our troops through the Vilna corridor and Galicia, as well as through Romania", putting forward this issue as a condition for signing a military convention. In addition, any attempts by the Anglo-French delegations to get acquainted with the defense enterprises of the USSR and the military units of the Red Army should have been rejected⁷⁴⁴. It is clear that under these conditions the military negotiations were doomed to failure and were used by the parties to put pressure on Germany. During military negotiations in Moscow, the Soviet side raised the issue of the passage of the Red Army through the territory of Poland and Romania, which, apparently, was considered by the

Soviet leadership as a kind of litmus test of the intentions of Western partners. Although England and France were well aware of Poland's negative attitude towards the problem of letting Soviet troops into their territory, it was decided to ask Warsaw again and try to find some kind of compromise formula that would allow continuing negotiations with the USSR. Apparently, the Western allies considered it unnecessary to request Romania, since it was already clear that

even if the Polish government, which was directly threatened by the German invasion, is categorically against it, then there is nothing to say about Romania. On August 21, the Romanian ambassador in Paris, reporting Warsaw's negative response, advised his government to take a similar position. Actually, Bucharest did not need any hints. As early as August 11, Carol II told Turkish President I. Inönü that he would not allow the passage of Soviet troops through Romanian territory, even if they came "to the aid of the Romanian army"⁷⁴⁵. On August 21, Prime Minister of Romania A. Călinescu wrote in his diary: "Reception at Karol. I am reporting a French-English request to Warsaw concerning the demand for the passage of Russian troops through Polish territory. They say that we will be asked the same question. King: "We will answer that this will become clear when there is a war. In any case, first of all, the unconditional recognition of Bessarabia is necessary."

Meanwhile, German Foreign Minister I. Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow on August 23, and in the course of negotiations with Stalin and Molotov on the night of August 24, a Soviet-German non-aggression pact and a secret additional protocol were signed that determined the spheres of interest of the parties in Eastern Europe. Finland, Estonia, Latvia, the territory of Poland east of the rivers Narew, Vistula and San, as well as Bessarabia⁷⁴⁷ were assigned to the sphere of interests of the USSR. Thanks to this agreement, the Soviet Union, for the first time in its history, achieved recognition of its interests in Eastern Europe by a great European power. Moscow managed to limit the possibility of Germany's diplomatic maneuvering in relation to England and Japan, which largely reduced the threat for the USSR of a pan-European consolidation on an anti-Soviet basis and a major conflict in the Far East, where at that time there were battles at Khalkhin Gol with Japanese troops. Of course, for this, Moscow had to take upon itself the obligation to abandon anti-German actions in the event of a German-Polish war, expand economic contacts with Germany and curtail anti-fascist propaganda. The

Soviet-German treaty caused confusion in Bucharest. On August 27, 1939, the Romanian government again assured Berlin of the loyalty of its course towards further friendship with the Third Reich and took credit for the fact that "it did nothing to improve relations with Soviet Russia, considering the improvement of relations with Germany the most important issue of its future policy". Romania "wants to go hand in hand with Germany on the Russian question" and wants to know Berlin's opinion on this. The Romanian side notified the German leadership that it would remain "neutral in any conflict between Germany and Poland, even if England and France interfered in it," and would continue to sell strategic raw materials to Berlin⁷⁴⁸. At the same time, Romania gave its consent to England and France for the transit of military materials to Poland. On August 31, the Romanian Prime Minister informed the German envoy that Bucharest had always pursued a policy towards the USSR that met the interests of the Third Reich, continued to scrupulously fulfill its obligations under the agreement of March 23, 1939, and hoped that Germany would also fulfill its obligations regarding supplies weapons. To Fabricius's request to ban the transit of military materials to Poland, Călinescu replied that this was impossible, since in this case England, France and Poland could demand the cessation of oil supplies to Germany⁷⁴⁹.

Under new

conditions The beginning of the German-Polish war required Romania to determine its position in the new situation. At the same time, the Romanian leadership decided not to rush, and only on September 4, after England and France declared war on Germany, a communiqué was published stating that Romania was determined "to continue to maintain the peaceful position that it has observed so far, seeking agreement with all neighboring countries. In this spirit, the government is ready to renew its proposal for a non-aggression pact" with Hungary. To the direct request of the German envoy to make a declaration of neutrality, the Romanian Prime Minister refused. In response to a new attempt by the German diplomat to achieve a ban on the transit of military materials and the passage of the British military mission to Poland, Călinescu said that Bucharest would not allow the passage of "a large number of weapons and the passage of a large group of British military personnel." For his part, the Romanian prime minister recalled the arms supplies promised by Berlin to Romania and indicated that Romanian oil supplies to Germany would be carried out depending on these G

At this point, Germany could not afford any harsh actions or even statements against Romania, so Bucharest was told that military supplies would continue under any circumstances. Moreover, on September 3-4, Rome and Berlin had to hold back Hungary, which tried to enlist their support for an attack on Romania⁷⁵⁰. However, the successes of the German troops in Poland and the inactivity of England and France increased the desire of Romania to distance themselves from them, and on September 6 the Crown Council decided to declare neutrality. On September 8, Romania announced its intention to "strictly observe the rules of neutrality developed by international conventions in relation to the belligerent countries participating in the current conflict"⁷⁵¹. At the same time, Bucharest refused a French offer to accept a military mission of instructors. On September 9, Berlin was informed that the Romanian leadership was interested in a strong Germany to "contain Russia." For its part, Germany indicated to Romania that it expected it to strictly observe neutrality. In response, on September 14, the Romanian government declared its agreement with this demand and asked to transfer captured Polish weapons to Romania in exchange for additional supplies of oil and grain. Bucharest is ready to continue the corresponding deliveries throughout the war, than "wants to give Germany the best proof of its goodwill."

Before the war, Romanian oil entered Germany mainly by sea from Constanta to Hamburg (74.5% of deliveries), along the Danube (21.5%) or by rail (4%). The economic blockade of Germany, declared by England, led to the fact that sea deliveries turned out to be impossible, and the available capacities of tankers, barges and tanks were not enough to maintain the total volume of deliveries. In addition, of the total tanker tonnage on the Danube (220,700 tons), Germany controlled only 45%. Under these conditions, England tried to limit the possibilities of oil supplies to Germany and on September 12 offered Romania negotiations on buying oil from her. However, the Romanian side insisted on selling oil for US dollars. To a certain extent, this was a general requirement of both foreign oil companies in Romania (including British ones) and the Romanian government itself, which had to pay interest on loans. On September 16, Romania introduced a new currency regime, according to which exporters had to sell 30% of their revenues to the National Bank at the official rate (with a 38% premium), and the remaining 70% at the free market rate to any buyers. Under these conditions, the Anglo-Romanian negotiations were interrupted⁷⁵².

On September 16, Berlin protested against the transit of Polish gold reserves taken from Constanta to England. In response, the Romanian side noted that it refused to accept these Polish funds for safekeeping, but could not prevent their transit, since gold is a commodity like all others. At the same time, new negotiations began on expanding the supply of raw materials to the Third Reich in exchange for additional arms supplies to Romania. On September 17, Soviet troops crossed the border of Poland⁷⁵³. On the same day, Romania, as well as all the states with which Moscow had diplomatic relations, received the text of a Soviet note to Poland with a notification that the USSR would continue to remain neutral in relation to these countries⁷⁵⁴. On September 20, Molotov asked the Romanian ambassador in Moscow, "couldn't there be any surprises for the Soviet Union due to the fact that the Polish government, the main Polish leaders and 500 Polish military aircraft are on the territory of Romania?" The Romanian diplomat replied that there would be no incidents, and "Polish troops that crossed or will cross the border have been and will be disarmed and interned"⁷⁵⁵.

Meanwhile, late in the evening of September 17, the Polish government and military command crossed the Romanian border, hoping to leave Romania for France. Contrary to the current Polish-Romanian union treaty, Bucharest on September 18 stated that "the special conditions in which the events in Poland unfolded on September 17, as well as the fact that Poland asked the Romanian government to extend hospitality to the head of state and ministers who take refuge on our territory, showed that Romania should continue to maintain a position of strict neutrality in relation to the current belligerents. The government, taking into account the interests of the motherland, will take care of the security and protection of the country's borders". On the morning of September 18, a message was sent from the Polish consulate in Chernivtsi to Polish diplomatic missions in other countries on behalf of the President of Poland. On the same day, the Romanian authorities demanded that the Polish government sign a declaration relinquishing all of its constitutional political and administrative duties. This would make it possible to present the situation as a transit not of the government, but simply of Polish citizens. However, Polish Foreign Minister J. Beck refused to sign such a statement. Then, on September 19, members of the Polish government were transferred to Slanitsy, where they were informed about the internment. Romania preferred to heed the "friendly"

advice of Germany⁷⁵⁷. For its part, Berlin agreed to transfer captured Polish weapons to the Romanian armed forces in exchange for oil and grain. The Romanian side tried to get Germany to at least partially pay for oil in foreign currency, but this proposal, of course, did not find support in Berlin. On the same day, the Romanian leadership drew the attention of England, France, Germany and Italy to "serious concern caused in Romania by the advance of the Soviets to the center of Europe and the social danger that may arise as a result of increased communist agitation", in connection with the change in the situation in Eastern Europe⁷⁵⁸. Since the diplomats of England and France pointed out that the main threat comes from Germany, which must be defeated, the Romanian leadership continued to probe Rome and Berlin. On September 21, Italy was told that "Poland and Romania have hitherto performed the function of a barrier against Bolshevism. Romania will not be able to continue to perform this function alone." At the same time, Berlin was asked if Romania "could count on the friendly support of Germany so as not to have any

troubles from Russia?" With German troops approaching the Romanian border on September 21, the Iron Guard, expecting support from Berlin, staged a new rebellion, during which Prime Minister Calinescu was killed. However, the occupation of Western Ukraine by the Red Army and the passivity of the German embassy in Bucharest, busy preparing a new agreement on the supply of raw materials from Romania, allowed the Romanian government to suppress the rebellion and begin repressions against its organizers⁷⁵⁹. On September 28, Romania asked France about its position in the event of a Romanian-Soviet conflict: "Will France and Great Britain go to war against Russia? Will they be able to provide us with effective assistance by sending squadrons to the country and the Anglo-French fleet to the Black Sea? The indication by the French diplomat in Bucharest of the need to defeat Germany, and not to reach an agreement with her, provoked a response from Gafenck: "The defeat of Germany will not solve the problem of E

Russia. In this regard, they (England and France. - *M.M.*) are obliged to weigh the chances of a final victory and [...] take into account all these facts. That is, Romania stood up for the restoration of peace in Europe on the basis of the Anglo-Franco-German agreement.

On the same day, in a conversation with the Soviet Charge d'Affaires of the USSR in Romania, Minister of Foreign Affairs Gafencu stressed the good-neighborly attitude towards Moscow, and on October 3, the new Romanian Prime Minister K. Argetoianu told the Soviet diplomat that "Romania will continue to maintain the most friendly relations with the Soviet Union". The Romanian authorities lifted restrictions on the distribution of the *Izvestia* newspaper in the country and the screening of Soviet films in Bessarabia⁷⁶⁰. At the same time, on September 29, a secret agreement was concluded with Germany on the supply of captured weapons and military materials to Romania from Poland in exchange for additional supplies of oil and food. The Romanian government was forced to agree to the clearing payment for oil supplies proposed by the German delegation, but at the rate of 40 lei per 1 mark, while the Germans insisted on a higher exchange rate⁷⁶¹. On September 30, Bucharest invited neutral Italy to influence the warring countries in order to find a compromise and restore peace, since "the continuation of the war will only benefit communism and the Slavs, who have already reached the heart of Europe, that it is necessary to convince France and England so that they do not go crazy, persevering in its steadfastness." At the same time, the Romanian leadership intensified the search for an ally against Moscow among the great powers, which were constantly reminded that on the Dniester it was protecting not only itself, but the entire European civilization from Bolshevism. But, since both England and France, and Germany and Italy took an evasive position, the Romanian leadership continued its policy of balancing .

The Soviet command closely followed the actions of Romania. By September 17, according to the cover plan , 763 troops of the Odessa Army Group (35th Rifle Corps consisting of the 15th, 51st and 95th Rifle Divisions) of the Ukrainian Front were deployed along the Dniester from Kalus to the Black Sea according to the cover plan . By the end of September, the 146th Rifle Division of the 13th Rifle Corps of the 12th Army of the Ukrainian Front was deployed along the Cheremosh and Dniester rivers to Kamenetz-Podolsk. On October 1, in all these troops there were 73,016 people, 22,988 horses, 52,550 rifles, 5,577 revolvers, 1,069 sabers, 2,634 machine guns, 515 guns and mortars, 191 tanks, 4 armored vehicles, 3,295 vehicles, 442 tractors and 143 motorcycles⁷⁶⁵ .

At 23.55 on September 26, the commander of the Ukrainian Front reported to the People's Commissar of Defense that, "according to the headquarters of the Odessa Group, Romania has noticeably strengthened the eastern and northern borders. Among the border guards, soldiers of the field troops are noted. The border pickets are reinforced with machine guns, and our territory is being intensively monitored. Along with this, there is a concentration of field troops in the border areas: in the Bendery region, up to three regiments of infantry; in the forest west of Chern to the artillery battalion; On September 23, an infantry battalion arrived in Soroca. In the areas of Golerkany, Dubossary, Criuleny, Vodului-Vody, Bendery - trench work. In the areas of Chern, Rezina up to ten firing points. Recently, cases of provocative behavior of the Romanian border guards, expressed in the shelling of our territory, have become more frequent. So, on September 21, 2 shots were fired at bunker No. 1055, on September 22, the northern bank of the Dniester near Mogilev-Podolsky was fired three times with a machine gun, and on .

September 24, bunker No. 1006 "766 was fired on . question. So, Colonel Pleshakov, a teacher at the Air Force Academy of the Red Army, believed that "now, having liberated Belarus and Ukraine, we will have to think about access to the Baltic Sea, especially since there are also former Belarusian territories in Lithuania, now you can click on Romania, it will quickly give up Bessarabia. Kulibaba, a Red Army soldier from a separate communications battalion of the 13th Rifle Corps, wondered "when will we correct the border with Romania, and Bessarabia needs to be liberated"⁷⁶⁸. The border guards were no exception. For example, cadet Petrov, in a conversation with Lieutenant Sokolov, said: "Our army, advancing in Poland, may turn its left flank into Bessarabia." According to the squad leader Shumeiko, "Romanian soldiers mock the Bessarabian people. Isn't it time for us to pay for such dirty tricks? September 27 at a meeting in the village. Yassky, the collective farmer Muzurash, said: "Our government did the right thing in defending the life and property of our brothers Belarusians and Ukrainians living in Poland. I can't wait for the order to render assistance to the Bessarabian people"⁷⁷⁰ . True, at that time the Soviet leadership was busy solving a number of foreign policy problems on its western and northwestern borders and was not ready for any drastic actions against Romania, so all these conversations fell into the category of "unhealthy". After the end

of the Polish campaign, according to the orders of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 0057 of October 11 and No. 0160 of October 23, 1939, the following changes took place in the military-territorial structure of the Red Army. The territory of Western Ukraine was included in the Kyiv Special Military District (KOVO). On the territory of the Odessa, Nikolaev, Kirovograd, Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporozhye regions, the Moldavian and Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics, the Odessa Military District (OdVO) was formed, the commander of which was appointed the former commander of the Kalinin Military District (KalVO) commander I.V. Boldin. The administration of the 13th army (the former Odessa army group) should have been relocated to Stanislavov and renamed the administration of the 12th army, and the personnel of the administration of the 12th army located there, after the surrender of cases, should have been returned to the place of their former service in the administration of the Kharkov military district (HVO)⁷⁷¹ .

Analyzing the situation in the Balkans, the apparatus of the ECCI prepared for September 28, 1939, a note "The Imperialist War and the Balkans", which noted that both belligerent groups would seek to draw the neutral Balkan countries into the war that had begun. Under these conditions, the tasks of the Communist parties in the Balkans were to "fight against the imperialist war, against intervention in the war, against the warmongers", which, according to the then Soviet terminology, were England and France, which, from the point of view of Moscow, were the main obstacle to the strengthening of Soviet influence in South Eastern Europe. In their work, the communists were supposed to expose the policy of the ruling circles of the Balkan countries, fight for the friendship of the Balkan peoples, and "with all their might strive to establish and strengthen friendly ties with the great Soviet Union and unite the Balkan countries around the Soviet Union. In this way they will also contribute to the limitation of the theater of war and the rapid liquidation of the latter. The communist parties should take into account the aggravation of social problems and explain to the working people their revolutionary tasks. "Popularizing the grandiose experience of the USSR, they should indicate to the working people that only the overthrow of the capitalist governments, only the establishment of a workers' and peasants' government and joining the Soviet Union on the basis of equality and reciprocity, only the implementation of socialism will ensure national equality, a free and happy life for the working people of the Balkan countries"772 .

Since October 1939, the idea of creating a bloc of neutral states in the Balkans under the auspices of Italy began to be discussed. England and France viewed this initiative as an opportunity to maintain the status quo in Southeastern Europe, to prevent the growing influence of Germany and the USSR there, and to try to win Italy over to their side. In Moscow, this idea was treated with discontent, and in Berlin more calmly, since they expected to use the possible unification in their own interests. For Romania, the projected block was supposed to be another guarantee against Hungary, Bulgaria and the Soviet Union. So far, according to Bucharest, Germany has performed the function of containing the USSR, but in the event of a protracted war, it will weaken and will not be able to protect Romania. Therefore, "the unification of neutral states in the present situation would protect part of Europe from revolutionary currents that are spreading wherever Russian influence is growing. It would thus correspond to the goals of the belligerent countries themselves, who have absolutely no interest in tomorrow's Europe being completely infected with Bolshevism. For its part, the Soviet leadership tried to keep Turkey, inclined towards strengthening the Balkan Entente, from rapprochement with Romania. So, on October 1, 1939, in a conversation with Turkish Foreign Minister Sh. Saracoglu I.V. Stalin, by the way, pointed to the possibility of Ankara being drawn into territorial disputes in the Balkans. For example, "there was a complication between the USSR and Romania because of Bessarabia - we do not think to attack the Romanians, but we will not give Bessarabia as a present - again a conflict. In my opinion, Romania is like Poland: just as it grabbed a lot of land, so does Romania. Anyone who contacts Romania with mutual assistance must keep his sword at the ready: Hungary is here, and maybe someone else - this is not beneficial for Tu

Although in October 1939 Romania managed to improve relations with Hungary somewhat, on November 21 Budapest announced that it would not participate in the bloc of neutrals until the disputes with Romania were completely resolved. The Bulgarian leadership made a similar statement. After the conclusion of the Anglo-French-Turkish Treaty of Mutual Assistance on October 19, 1939, Italy actually refused to participate in the proposed agreement, citing the fact that it was not a neutral, but only a non-belligerent power, and Germany, through diplomatic channels, notified the Balkan countries of the undesirability of their participation in this endeavor. In addition, the revived contradictions in the Balkans did not allow an agreement to be reached, and by December the idea of a bloc was completely buried. On November 3, Romania again tried to find out from England and France whether their guarantees extended to Bessarabia, blackmailing them with the possibility of rapprochement with Germany775. On November 15, the English Committee for the Prevention of the Supply of Oil to Germany recommended that foreign oil companies in Romania reduce supplies to Germany, increase exports to countries with convertible currencies and set the highest possible prices for oil exported to Germany. On November 16, German-Romanian negotiations resumed, during which the German delegation demanded an increase in the mark's exchange rate to 75 lei. For its part, Bucharest offered Germany to pay for 40% of oil deliveries with slogans, and the rest with goods that Romania needs776. Romania turned to England and France for support, but London preferred to take a wait-and-see attitude, and although Paris increased its purchases of oil, it took the bulk of the proceeds for it as loan payments777 .

The outbreak of the Soviet-Finnish war exacerbated fears in the Romanian leadership regarding the Soviet Union, which was told on December 2 that Bucharest's policy towards Moscow "continues to be benevolent." True, Soviet diplomats in Bucharest received information about the transfer of Romanian troops to Bessarabia and Bukovina, where it was supposed to concentrate 20 divisions . The attention of the Romanian leadership was attracted by an article by B. Stefanov in the magazine "Communist International", which stated that England and France were striving to draw Romania, which oppresses national minorities, into a war, but "the interests of the peoples of Romania, their peaceful and free development and a better future are impossible without an immediate conclusion mutual assistance pact with the USSR, similar to the treaties between the Soviet Union and the Baltic states. Bucharest immediately assured Moscow that it had no intention of violating neutrality, was showing concern for its national minorities, and intending to "observe the best possible relations with the USSR. " 780

the views of the author, which do not correspond to the views of the Soviet government"781. Romania was also concerned about information that, in a conversation with the French ambassador in Moscow on December 5, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V.P. Potemkin drew his interlocutor's attention to the fact that with the loss of Bessarabia, Odessa is a "dead port", and in the new international conditions, the Soviet government cannot be indifferent to this problem782. Therefore, the Romanian leadership intensified the search for an ally against Moscow and tried to win the support of the great European powers on the issue of Bessarabia. However, a Romanian request to Berlin on 8 December went unanswered, despite the fact that on 6 December Bucharest agreed to increase oil supplies, hoping to obtain additional weapons .

On December 14, England notified Bucharest that her guarantees extended to Bessarabia in the event that "Turkey immediately comes to the aid of Rumania and if there is no danger of opposition from Italy. If the Romanian Government is in a position to give an affirmative answer to these two questions, then His Majesty's Government is ready to immediately consider the new situation together with the French Government in order to determine what contribution it will be able to make to the defense of Romania." France on the same day informed Romania that the guarantees concerned only the case of German aggression, and that Britain and France could provide assistance in the event of a Romanian-Soviet conflict only depending on the position of Turkey. Considering that the Anglo-French-Turkish treaty contained a clause on Turkey's non-participation in anti-Soviet actions, getting its support was a serious problem. All these excuses convinced Bucharest that it would hardly be possible to draw London and Paris into a war with the USSR for Romanian interests. Under these conditions, the Romanian government decided to make new concessions to Germany, which in early December again demanded an increase in the value of the mark, hoping to enlist its support against the Soviet Union. On the same day, Romania raised the exchange rate of the German mark against the Romanian leu by 15%, notifying Germany that it was waiting for her help against the USSR, as it was doing this contrary to the opinion of England and France784. At the same time, on December 15, Romania asked Britain to keep her answer secret, since its disclosure could push the USSR to a violent solution of the Be

Romania's attempts to get guaranteed support against the USSR from its neighbors also did not bring results. The allies in the Balkan Entente were not interested in getting involved in the Soviet-Romanian conflict. Hungary and Bulgaria sought to realize their own territorial claims against Romania. Italy expected to continue rapprochement with Hungary and limited itself to general promises. Meanwhile, from the beginning of December 1939, foreign oil companies in Romania began to raise prices for oil products exported to Germany. Accordingly, Berlin put pressure on Bucharest, and on December 21 the Romanian government increased the value of the mark by another 20%. True, on December 22, Romania proposed to England to start negotiations on increasing oil exports. By the beginning of 1940, the Danube was frozen over, and oil supplies to Germany by rail were reduced from 6 to 2 echelons per day. Accordingly, the export of oil to England and its possessions by March 1940 increased to 120 thousand tons per month. At the same time, England sought to ensure that the Romanian government paid for the cost of oil supplied by foreign companies to Germany in convertible currency. For its part, Germany recommended that Romania establish control over the activities of foreign oil companies.

On January 17, 1940, the creation of the General Commissariat for Oil Issues was announced in Bucharest, which was supposed to control the extraction, processing and export of oil. At the same time, negotiations were underway to increase oil exports to Germany to 130,000 tons per month. In response, Berlin provided Romania with the weapons necessary "to defend its independence and territorial integrity against any aggression." However, weapons came to Romania not only from Germany, but also from England and France, which, in response to the tightening of government control over oil companies, blocked the accounts of the Romanian government in their banks and threatened Romania with depriving it of its guarantees785. It is clear that under these conditions the Romanian leadership continued its policy of maneuvering between the warring countries. The next session of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Balkan Entente on February 2-4 showed that during the war Romania was not going to make territorial concessions to its neighbors. The Turkish proposal for military cooperation against aggression in the Balkans, although accepted, was never implemented.

Not wanting to aggravate relations with foreign oil companies in Romania, on January 21, 1940, Germany proposed a compromise solution to financial problems, but specific German-Romanian negotiations did not begin until February 13. In the end, on March 7, an agreement was reached that in 1940 Romania would supply Germany with 1.5 million tons of oil in exchange for Czechoslovak and Polish captured weapons, and the Romanian government would advance the supplier companies in foreign currency. Thus, Anglo-French-German pressure forced Romania to pay the bills of foreign oil companies786. To constant inquiries from the Romanian leadership about the possibility of Soviet aggression, Germany, seeking to stabilize oil prices, responded on February 8 that the situation in Romania did not bother her, since she did not foresee any Russian aggression787. Nevertheless, the Romanian leadership continued to take a firm stand against the territorial claims of its neighbors. Thus, visiting Chisinau on January 24, 1940, Carol II declared that the territory between the Prut and the Dniester "will be forever Romanian"788. On March 16, it was announced that 30 billion lei was allocated for the needs of the armed forces and that they were ready to defend themselves against any attack. Speaking in the Senate in connection with the opening of a new session of the Romanian Parliament, Gafencu on March 19 announced Romania's readiness to defend what was obtained "as a result of the free decision of the meetings in Chisinau,

Chernivtsi and in Alba-Yulia"789 .

Before the choice

Certain problems arose in the winter of 1939-1940. and the Soviet Union. The Soviet-Finnish war not only restricted the freedom of action of the Soviet leadership, but also sharply worsened relations between the USSR and the Anglo-French allies, who began to develop plans for anti-Soviet military operations. Even after the end of the Soviet-Finnish war, England and France, seeking to strangle Germany with an economic blockade, continued preparations to establish control over Scandinavia and destroy the Soviet oil fields in the Caucasus⁷⁹⁰. At the same time, they tried to persuade Turkey, Iran and Japan to participate in the war with the USSR. On March 28, the Anglo-French allies again discussed their military strategy and decided to mine Norwegian territorial waters in order to impede the delivery of Swedish iron ore to Germany. However, the opinions of the parties differed on the issue of the bombing of Baku. If France insisted on speeding up this action, then England took a more evasive position, fearing a Soviet-German alliance. In addition, the position of England was influenced by the fact that Turkey and Iran evaded interference in the struggle of the great powers, and the USSR, knowing about the common intentions of the Western allies, proposed on March 27 to improve relations with London. As a result, it was decided to continue preparations for an airstrike in the Caucasus, so that "the operation could be carried out without delay, if an appropriate decision was made"⁷⁹¹. It was necessary to strengthen the blockade of the USSR, especially in the Far East, and to delay the response to the Soviet offer of trade negotiations until the issue of bombing Baku was resolved . Although Moscow did not know all the details of the preparation of the Anglo-French actions in the Caucasus, the available

information made it possible to note the growing threat to the southern borders of the USSR. Therefore, on March 4, the command of the Red Army Air Force received instructions from the General Staff that "SAVO, ZakVO and OdVO are of particular operational importance", and began to prepare to provide these districts with the necessary material and technical means and ammunition "for 1 month of combat work"⁷⁹³. Speaking at the evening meeting of the VI session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on March 29, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR V.M. Molotov stated that "now in Syria and in the Middle East in general there is a big suspicious fuss with the creation of Anglo-French, mainly colonial, armies led by General Weygand. We must be vigilant against attempts to use these colonial and non-colonial troops for purposes hostile to the Soviet Union. Any attempts of this kind would cause retaliatory measures on our part against the aggressors, and the danger of such a game with fire should be completely obvious to the powers hostile to the USSR and to those of our neighbors who will turn out to be an instrument of this aggressive policy against the USSR. In addition to these rather serious warnings, the Soviet side also took concrete military measures to strengthen the troops of the Transcaucasian Military District (ZakVO)⁷⁹⁵ . In accordance with the order of the People's Commissar of Defense and the Chief of the General Staff, the Air Force Commander

ordered on April 9 and 11 the long-range bomber air regiments of the ZakVO and OdVO "to begin studying the Middle East theater of operations, paying special attention to the following objects": Alexandria, Beirut, Haifa, Alexandretta, Port Said, Nicosia, Larnaca, Famagusta, Aleppo, Suez Canal, Istanbul, Izmid, Sinop, Samsun, Trapezond, Mudaniya, Smyrna, Gallipoli, Ankara, Kirikale, Bosphorus and Dardanelles. It was necessary in strict secrecy to work out possible routes, bomb load and conduct 2 training flights over its territory with a range and navigation conditions corresponding to the Middle East theater of operations, including bombing and air battles with meeting fighters⁷⁹⁶. On April 7, the Air Force command asked the NPO Intelligence Directorate to transfer to the Air Force headquarters materials on the Mosul-Kerkuk region, including those that can be obtained in Berlin through the air attache. On April 23, reconnaissance materials were sent to the headquarters of the ZakVO from the 5th Directorate of the NPO "on the objects of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Palestine for a thorough study by the flight personnel" of the units. Transferred on May 25 to the headquarters of the Air Force of the district, these materials contained maps, plans, diagrams, photographs of the districts of Istanbul, Tabriz, Qazvin, Baghdad, Mosul, Haifa⁷⁹⁷ .

Meanwhile, a British reconnaissance plane from the Habbaniya air base in Iraq on March 30 conducted aerial photography of the Baku region, and on April 5 - of the Poti and Batumi regions. London and Paris were completing the development of specific military plans for operations in the Caucasus. It was planned to prepare a single Anglo-French plan, which was to be submitted to the governments for consideration. However, the German invasion of Denmark and Norway on April 9 tied the hands of the Western Allies to a certain extent, since the available air forces did not allow the air group to be strengthened in the Middle East. On April 23, the Supreme Military Council of the Allies, having again considered the problem of an air strike on the Caucasian oil fields, stated that "the threat of an attack is a reality and therefore is a means of pressure" on the USSR. It was decided to complete the preparation of the attack as soon as possible (tentative date is the end of June - the beginning of July) and increase pressure on Turkey in order to persuade it to participate in the anti-Soviet campaign⁷⁹⁸. In early May, France informed England that it would be possible to launch an operation against Baku as early as May 15, but on May 10, Germany went on the offensive on the Western Front, and the Allies had more pressing problems⁷⁹⁹ .

It is clear that in the spring of 1940 the Soviet leadership tried not to aggravate relations with Romania. In the same speech on March 29, Molotov noted that "we do not have a non-aggression pact with Romania. This is due to the existence of an unresolved controversial issue, the issue of Bessarabia, the seizure of which by Romania the Soviet Union never recognized, although it never raised the question of the return of Bessarabia by military means. Therefore no

there are no grounds for any deterioration in Soviet-Romanian relations either"800. This statement caused some concern in Romania. Already on March 30, the Romanian Prime Minister G. Tatarescu notified Germany of the need for further rearmament of the Romanian army and asked to influence Moscow so that it would not lay claim to Bessarabia801. To this the answer was received that relations with Romania would depend on the fulfillment by her of her economic obligations to Germany. New Romanian requests showed that Berlin did not believe in the imminent possibility of a Soviet initiative in resolving the territorial issue. The situation on the Soviet-Romanian demarcation

line was rather nervous. So, on November 13, 1939, west of Mogilev-Podolsky, from the Romanian side, two shots were fired at Soviet territory, as a result of which a collective farm bull was wounded on the western outskirts of Serebria. On December 1, near the city of Kuta, Soviet border guards detained 10 Romanian soldiers who had crossed the river. Cheremosh. January 18, 1940 on the river. Cheremosh, Romanian soldiers fired on the Soviet border detachment, and when on January 21 the Soviet side demanded an investigation of this fact, it was stated that "the Romanian soldiers did not fire at our border guards, and that the shelling probably took place from two unknown persons who crossed into Romania from the USSR and who offered armed resistance to the Romanian border line, who tried to detain them. On March 10, during the arrest of an unknown person crossing the ice of the Dniester from the Bessarabian coast, fire was opened on the Soviet border guards. On March 15, the Romanian border guard opened fire on an unknown person who was trying to cross to the USSR. As a result, came under fire from. Tsekinovka. In total, in January-March 1940, the Romanian side opened fire 26 times on Soviet territory, its inhabitants and border guards. In response to the protests of the Soviet border guard, the Romanian side admitted 2 cases, rejected 5, and still had not received a response to 19. The Romanian border authorities continued their attempts to impose on the Soviet representatives the name of the Dniester line as the state border. Reporting these facts, on April 5, the GUPV of the NKVD asked the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs "to take the necessary measures through the diplomatic line. " "Such behavior of the

Romanian units is unacceptable," Molotov stressed, "and the question arises whether the Romanian troops located near Soviet territory are controlled by anyone." The Soviet side insisted "on taking immediate measures to stop such cases." The Romanian side, of course, denied its guilt and put forward counterclaims804. It is clear that no measures were taken, and cases of shelling by the Romanian units continued805. On April 19, the Soviet charge d'affaires in Rome, in a conversation with the Romanian envoy, noted that Molotov's speech was in fact an "invitation to a waltz", it was necessary to have a detailed conversation with him on the problems of Soviet-Romanian relations. In response, the Romanian diplomat said that it would be risky, since Moscow could put "the question of Bessarabia for discussion." His Soviet interlocutor noted that, perhaps, it would not be about territorial concessions, but about the creation of a Soviet military base in Romania. It is still unknown whether this conversation was a personal initiative of the Soviet diplomat or whether he was fulfilling an order from Moscow. In any case, the probing of the Romanian position gave negative results.

Meanwhile, in the first half of April 1940, Britain and France began to refuse to provide Romania with currency to pay for oil deliveries to Germany. Under their pressure, a number of Romanian ministers spoke out against the payment system stipulated in the March 7 agreement with Germany. However, the German representatives managed to get the consent of Carol II to settle this problem in favor of Berlin807. The spread of the war to Scandinavia and the passive position of England and France led to a decrease in their influence in the Balkans. Taking into account the developments in Europe, Carol II expressed the opinion on April 15 that Romania should "join the political line of Germany", and proposed that negotiations with Berlin be guided by these intentions, seeking a promise to protect the "territorial integrity of Romania"808. On April 19, the Romanian Crown Council spoke out against the voluntary cession of Bessarabia to the USSR, preferring to go to a military conflict809. Accordingly, in May 1940, the Romanian government increasingly began to remind the German diplomats in Bucharest that "the future of Romania depends only on Germany"810.

The course of the war in Western Europe required Romania to revise its foreign policy in favor of closer rapprochement with the only possible adversary of the USSR at that time - Germany. Already on May 27, a new "Agreement on the exchange of German military materials for Romanian oil products" was signed between Romania and Germany, according to which it was supposed to increase oil supplies to Berlin by 30% in exchange for providing the Romanian army with modern weapons. Romania provided Germany with 1 billion lei for the purchase of oil from foreign companies operating on its territory. At the same time, the price of a ton of Romanian oil was reduced from 7 thousand to 3.5 thousand lei811. At the same time, the Romanian leadership decided to abandon neutrality and take an orientation towards Berlin, since "Germany was now becoming the master of the continent. It was necessary to enter into negotiations with her" and offer cooperation in any field at her request812. On June 1, new Romanian inquiries about Germany's actions in the event of "aggression by Soviet Russia" were answered that Germany was not interested in the problem of Bessarabia - this was a matter for Romania itself813.

Soviet intelligence continued to collect information about the armed forces of Romania. As of January 1, 1940, the Romanian Air Force had 1,439 aircraft (238 heavy and medium bombers, 440 light bombers and reconnaissance aircraft, 201 reconnaissance aircraft, 331 fighters, 229 attack and training aircraft), and from

taking into account hydroaviation (61 aircraft) and 250 interned Polish aircraft, their total number increased to 1,750 aircraft. At the same time, according to incomplete data, there were only 727 aircraft in combat units⁸¹⁴. According to intelligence report No. 4 of the intelligence department of the KOVO headquarters of June 1, 1940, general mobilization was announced in Romania on April 30, which made it possible to create an army of almost 2 million and deploy up to 50 divisions. Military units were formed from the soldiers of the Polish army. As of April 1, 1940, it was assumed that 21 infantry, 2 cavalry divisions and 1 mountain infantry brigade were concentrated in the east of Romania. The armament of the Romanian army was estimated at 1,200,130 rifles, 50,000 carbines, 39,334 light and 16,320 heavy machine guns, 582 anti-aircraft machine guns, 5,134 guns, 525 mortars and 198 tanks⁸¹⁶. According to intelligence data, on June 1, 1940, the Romanian Air Force, which had 163 airfields and landing sites, had 11 air regiments: 4 fighter (162 aircraft), 3 bomber (96 aircraft), 3 reconnaissance (262 aircraft) and 1 naval aviation (18 aircraft). In total, there were 658 combat and 500 auxiliary aircraft⁸¹⁷. Intelligence report No. 14 of the intelligence department of the KOVO headquarters reported that for the period May 20–31, 1940, "Romania continues to transfer military units to Bessarabia and Bukovina and build defensive structures on the borders of the river. Dniester and Prut"⁸¹⁸.

At the command-and-staff exercises carried out according to the plans for the operational training of the highest command personnel and the headquarters of the KOVO and OdVO, naturally, various options for possible operations against Romania were played out. Here we should mention one such game, the materials of which were then used in operational planning in June 1940. On April 19–23, a front-line operational game was held at the headquarters of the KOVO on the theme "Offensive operation of the front", during which they studied, among other things, "offensive the possibilities of the front" on the territory of Bessarabia. The general situation in the game was set as follows: in the spring of 1939, the "browns" (Romania) concentrated their forces on the border with the "reds", deploying the Eastern Front as part of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th armies. Having received 250 fighters and 150 bombers from the Anglo-French allies, they began provocations on the border and are preparing to go on the offensive against the "Reds" on July 23. Meanwhile, their "White" (Turkey) allies announced mobilization in May 1939 and by July 15 deployed up to four army corps on the Caucasian border and 2 corps near the "Orange" (Bulgaria) border. Other allies of the "browns", "violet" (Yugoslavia), in early May, allowed the "corps of the colored troops of the allies" into their territory, which is being transferred to Romania, while they themselves have completed mobilization and are concentrating troops in the northeast of the country. The "Orange" deployed troops on the northern and southeastern borders, and the "yellow" (Hungary) - on the eastern border, but both countries declared neutrality. The Allied High Command, preparing the main attack on the "Reds" from the territory of the "Whites", set the task for the "Browns" to pin down the troops of the "Reds" in the southwest, to defeat them on the river. Dniester and by the end of August 5 to go to the front Odessa, Ananiev, Gaisin, Zhmerinka, Proskurov.

The main command of the "Reds" on July 17 ordered to deploy the Southern Front against the "Browns" as part of the 16th, 8th, 19th and 3rd Cavalry Armies and "in order to disrupt the plan of aggression and ensure the country's defense capability" to defeat the enemy on his territory. On July 21, the "Reds" were to go on the offensive from the front of Kuta, Staraya Ushitsa, where the main blow was delivered along the Prut and Siret rivers, and Dubossary, Nezavertailovka in the general direction of Chisinau, Iasi. It was planned by August 1 that the main grouping would go to the front of Kampulung, Falticheni, Dorohoy, Edinet, and the auxiliary grouping - to the front of Orhei, Khushi, Cimislia, r. Kogilnik. By the end of August 5, the "Reds" should reach the Yakobeni, Tirgu-Okna, Byrlad, Leipzigsкая, r. Kogilnik, preventing the withdrawal of enemy forces through the Foksha Gate. By August 10, the troops of the Southern Front were to reach the front of Kampulung, Tirgu-Okna, Fokshany, Galati, r. Danube, surrounding and defeating the main forces of the "browns" in the northern part of Bessarabia. The Southern Front consisted of 45 rifle and 10 cavalry divisions, 10 tank brigades, 17 RGK artillery regiments and 29 air regiments (1,872 combat aircraft). He was opposed by an enemy grouping of 39 infantry and 3 cavalry divisions, 10 artillery regiments, supported by 889 combat aircraft. During the game, the participants carefully studied the theater of operations, noting the presence of defensive structures on the Dniester, Prut and Siret rivers, which, although they are not modern fortified areas, will require significant preparation for their breakthrough. The most profitable operational directions for the actions of the troops of the Southern Front were identified: Chernivtsi, Roman, Bacau and Tiraspol, Chisinau, Khushi, Focsani.

Going on the offensive on July 21, the 16th and 8th armies of the "Reds" by the end of July 24 reached the line of Krasnoilsk, Mikhaileni, Gertsu, Chervona Mari, Darabani, Potureni, Brichany, capturing a bridgehead on the southern bank of the Prut. The 3rd Cavalry Army was preparing to enter the operational breakthrough. The bridgeheads near Mogilev-Podolsky and Rybnitsa were captured, and the troops of the 19th Army occupied the line of Mashkovtsy, Chisinau, r. Botna. The enemy stubbornly defended and launched counterattacks, but by the end of July 26, the main forces of the 3rd Cavalry Army reached the area of Falticheni, Pashkani, Tirgu-Nyamts, threatening the rear of the main enemy grouping. The troops of the 16th Army advanced to the line of Gura-Humorului, Suceava, Dorokhoy and continued to advance following the moving units along the river valley. Siret. The 8th Army reached the front of Sareni, Tarnovo, Savka, and the 19th Army repelled the counterattacks of the "browns" from Orhei and Cimislia, reaching the front of the river. Kogilnik, Korlucheny, Gura-Galbina. By the end of July 28, the flank groupings of the troops of the Southern Front reached the line of Tirgu-Nyamts, Felticheni, Botushany in the north, and Orhei, Miklaushany, r. The road at Khushi, Cimislia. The 3rd Cavalry Army broke through behind enemy lines: its 8th Cavalry Corps occupied the Bolotin

the cavalry corps - the Falesty region, the 3rd cavalry corps - the Tirgu-Frumos region, and the 9th motorized division - Roman. Under these conditions, the command of the "Reds" decided to complete the encirclement of the enemy in the area of the city of Yassy. To create an external encirclement front, part of the forces of the 16th Army advanced to the Jacobeni-Bacau line, and the 3rd Cavalry Army to the Bacau-Tekuch line. At the same time, it should be emphasized that this game was not a practice of the impending offensive, but an ordinary stage in the operational training of the highest command personnel and headquarters of the KOVO armies. It was precisely the assessment of the level of this preparation that was devoted to the conclusions of the game's management, which, in particular, pointed out the need to "pay more attention to the study of the defensive operation"⁸¹⁹.

Meanwhile, in April 1940, the transfer of Soviet troops from the Finnish front to the places of permanent deployment began. At the same time, there was a strengthening of the Red Army grouping in the South-Western direction. The command of the 8th Rifle Corps, 7th, 44th, 60th, 62nd, 72nd, 87th, 97th, 131st, 141st Rifle Divisions, 137th Rifle Divisions returned to KOVO. th, 168th howitzer artillery regiments and the 34th artillery division of the RGK, as well as a new 139th rifle division arrived. The 51st and 95th Rifle Divisions, the 320th Cannon and 120th Howitzer Artillery Regiments of the RGK returned to the OdVO, and the new 150th and 173rd Rifle Divisions and the headquarters of the 14th Rifle Corps arrived. In May, 2 fighter regiments (20th from KalVO and 149th from LVO) and the command and control of the 56th air brigade (from BOVO) were deployed to KOVO, and 3 fighter regiments (4th from BOVO, 146th from the Moscow Military District, the 69th from the KalVO), the management of the 13th air brigade (from the KalVO) and 2 corrective air squadrons (the 15th from the PriVO and the 23rd from the Moscow Military District)⁸²¹. As a result, the KOVO Air Force grouping increased from 639 aircraft as of March 1 to 1,334 aircraft as of June 1, and the OdVO Air Force, respectively, from 231 to 812 aircraft⁸²². Along with the transfer of additional troops on June 9, it was ordered to begin the formation of 2 mechanized corps in KOVO and 1 in OdVO⁸²³. At the same time, the demobilization of reservists drafted into the Red Army began, so the number of personnel of the KOVO and OdVO decreased, respectively, from 638,324 and 231,581 people on May 1 to 613,674 and 220,110 people on June 1, 1940

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The redeployment of Soviet troops was noticed by German diplomats in Moscow, which was reported to Berlin on May 21, 1940⁸²⁵. On May 23, the Romanian General Staff turned to the Supreme High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW) with a request for help, referring to the concentration of the Red Army on the Dniester⁸²⁶. On May 25, the German ambassador in Moscow, Count F.V. von Schulenburg turned to Molotov to clarify the rumors about the concentration of Soviet troops on the border with Romania. "Molotov replied that all these rumors were groundless," Schulenburg reported to Berlin. "There is no doubt, perhaps, that the Soviet troops in the southern part of Russia, in the Crimea and the Caucasus are being strengthened," but these measures do not go beyond defensive⁸²⁷. This information was also passed on to the Romanian diplomats in Moscow, who, in their reports to Bucharest, reported on the concentration of Soviet troops on the Dniester⁸²⁸. On June 1, Romania proposed to the USSR to expand trade, but the Soviet side did not support this proposal. At the same time, an incident with a Soviet aircraft that flew into Romanian airspace at km 62 was settled.

On June 20, the German envoy in Bucharest was given a statement from the Romanian government, which considered cooperation with Germany, "dictated both by the geopolitical position of Romania and the emerging new European order, necessary in all areas. The Romanian government believes that the identity of interests that bound both states in the past also determines today and will determine even more tomorrow their relationship and requires the rapid organization of this cooperation, which presupposes the existence of a strong Romania both politically and economically, because only such Romania is a guarantee that she will be able to fulfill her role as defender of the Dniester and the mouths of the Danube"⁸³⁰. However, Berlin was in no hurry to respond. On June 21, in Romania, instead of the "National Renaissance Front", the "Party of the Nation" was created, headed by the king. As the international situation changed, Hungary and Bulgaria began to more actively remind of their territorial claims to Romania. The expansion of the war in Western Europe in May-June 1940 allowed the Soviet Union to intensify its policy towards the Baltic states and Romania. **Soviet military planning** Like other states bordering the USSR, Romania was considered in Moscow as a potential adversary, and the Soviet military command periodically prepared plans in case of war in the South-West direction. The change in the international situation in Europe in May 1940 required the Soviet leadership to make specific preparations to resolve

the Bessarabian issue. On May 11–14, the

operational department of the KOVO headquarters ordered the military topographic department to start collecting mobilization sets of maps of the Romanian border zone⁸³¹. Already on June 3, the chief of staff of the KOVO commander N.F. Vatutin developed and handed over to People's Commissar of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union S.K. Timoshenko a top secret memorandum of particular importance, which contained "brief considerations on the basics of organizing and conducting the first front-line operation against Romania. The immediate strategic goal of the front is *the encirclement and destruction of the armed forces of Romania in the territory east of the line of the Carpathian Mountains, Focsani, Galati, r. Danube with a complete prohibition of the withdrawal of the Romanians to the west of the specified line. As a result of the operation of the army of the front, by the end of M-23 - M-25, they should take possession of the Carpathian ridge, the Foksha Gates and the lower reaches of the river. Danube and go to the front pass [od] Bold, Kosna, Focsany, Brailov, lim. Rasim.*

The total depth of the front-line operation is 220–250 km. The average pace of the operation is 10 km per day.

The operation must be carried out in close cooperation with the Black Sea Fleet." According to the headquarters of the KOVO, the armed forces of Romania were estimated at 36 infantry divisions. The Eastern Front (headquarters - Bacau) was deployed against the Soviet Union, consisting of three armies: one army in Bukovina (presumably the headquarters - Chernivtsi), the 3rd army (headquarters - Iasi) and the 4th army (headquarters - Tekuch). The total strength of this grouping was up to 26 infantry and up to 2-4 cavalry divisions. The rest of the Romanian forces were deployed against Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria or were located inside the country and were combined into two armies: 1st (headquarters - Klausenburg) and 2nd (headquarters - Bucharest). Under favorable conditions, Romania could, due to the weakening of the western border, concentrate against the USSR up to 32 infantry, 4 cavalry divisions and up to 1,200 aircraft. In the presence of allies, the main forces of Romania will most likely be deployed on the Dniester, in an unfavorable situation for her, the Prut will become the main defensive line. "Currently, the main forces of the Romanians are grouped in the region of Chernivtsi, Balti, Iasi. Auxiliary group - in the Chisinau area. Reserves in the regions: 1) Botushani, Iasi, Bakeu (the largest). 2) Fluid, Galati, Fokshany. Considering the question of possible allies of Romania, Vatutin pointed out that his decision "largely depends on the further behavior of Italy: whether she will come out with Germany or against Germany. In this regard, the war with Romania can be under the following three options. If Italy is on the side of the Anglo-French allies, then they will be able to provide assistance to Romania through Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria will be pinned down by Turkey. "In this case, the Romanians will additionally be able to receive up to two or three corps and up to 500 aircraft, bringing the composition of the troops to 42-45 infantry divisions and 1,700 aircraft. However, the arrival of the allies will be delayed, and the Romanians must be defeated before their approach. If Italy is on the side of Germany, then Romania will be left alone. In addition, the option is not ruled out when "Bulgarians and Hungary (or Germany) act against the Romanians simultaneously with us." In both "cases, during the first front-line operation, the Romanians will not be able to deploy more than 32 infantry divisions against us," Vatutin concluded. Based on the characteristics of the theater of operations, the chief of staff of the KOVO proposed the following operational solution: "a) Deliver the main blow with the forces of the 12th and 5th shock armies and the mechanized cavalry army from the front of Kuta,

Kalus in the general direction to Chernivtsi [y], Bakeu.

b) An auxiliary strike by forces No. A (OdVO) (as in the document. - *M.M.*) to deliver from the front of Grigoriopol, Glinnoye in the general direction to Byrlad. c) By active actions to forge the pr-ka on the front Kalus, Dubossary. d) Immediate task: to force the river. Dniester, break through the defenses of the avenue, destroy its opposing forces and by the end of M-10 (not later) exit:

in the main direction - to the front of Kosna, Neyamtsa, Botushani, Edinet, skipping the horse-mechanized army in the region of Roman, Bakeu, Piatra.

On the auxiliary direction - to the front: Mouth, Khush [i], Falchiu [Falchiu], Leipzig, skipping tank corps in the area of Dokolina, Byrlad.

At the same time, the forces of the sea and airborne assault forces and the MMD - to capture the area of \u200b\u200bFocsany, Galati, Tulcea, Brailov

[Braila]. e) In the future, destroy the encircled enemy and go to M-23 - 25 to the front indicated earlier, in readiness to conduct the next operation on Bucurest [Bucharest]." Proceeding from such a concept of the operation, the following grouping of forces and tasks of the troops was assumed: "a) 12 A - Shtarm Stanislav. Composition: 4 sc, 12 sd, 5-6 tbr, 5-6 up RGK. Combat strength [8th, 13th, 17th, 15th rifle corps, 96th, 192nd, 58th, 139th, 72nd, 7th, 80th, 62th I, 135th, 33rd, 29th, 125th rifle divisions, 375th, 168th, 376th, 324th, 135th, 120th artillery regiments, 34th, 315th, 316th artillery divisions of the RGK].

Deployed at the front Yablunytsya, Borkut, the mouth of the river. Zbruch. It delivers the main blow with its right wing in the area southwest of Snyatyn - between the river. Seret [Siret] and Carpathian mountains.

The immediate task is to destroy the Chernivtsi grouping of the pr-ka in cooperation with 5 A and seize Moldava region, Radauts [Redautsi], Seret [Siret], Chernivtsi[y]. Ensure the passage of the KMA into the breakthrough.

Further - to M-10 go to the front of Kosna, Neyamtsy, Folticheni, discarding the pr-ka to the east and southeast, thus preparing the complete environment of the pr-ka.

The ultimate task is the encirclement and destruction of the pr-ka in cooperation with 5 A, No. A and KMA and access to the front pass [od] Courageous, Kosna, Windows with the transfer of part of the forces for

reinforcement 5 A. The border on the left is the river. Zbruch, Dorokhoy,

lawsuit. Choldeshty, Roman ... b) 5

A - the army of Yarmolinty. Composition - 3-4 sk,

9-12 sd, 4 tbr, 4 ap RGK. Combat strength [27th, 30th, 36th, 37th rifle corps, 131st, 44th, 60th, 124th, 169th, 121st, 140th, 187 - I, 55th, 145th, 185th, 50th rifle divisions, 305th, 137th, 330th, 331st, 318th, 429th artillery regiments and one artillery division of the RGK] . The mouth of the river is deployed at the front.

Zbruch, Kalus.

It strikes the main blow with its right wing in the direction of Botushany and then advances in the strip between the river. Seret [Siret] and Prut.

The immediate task is to destroy the pr-ka between the r.r. Dniester and Prut, assistance 12 A in the destruction of the Chernivtsi gr. avenue and access to the river. Rod with the capture of crossings.

Further - to M-10 to reach the front of Botushany [Botosani], Edinet. The ultimate task is the encirclement and destruction of Ch. forces pr-ka with further access to the front Windows, Fokshany. The border on the left is Bar, Kalus, Bratushany, the mouth of the river. Ungur, b. The Prut to Yassy ...

c) 10 A - the assault of Vapnyarka. Composition -

1-2 sc, 3-6 sd. Combat strength [57th Rifle Corps, 130th, 176th, 115th, 151st Rifle Divisions]. Deployed at the front Kalus, Dubossary. Strikes: from the

Mogilev-Podolsk region to the southwest. direction and from the Dubossary region to the north-west. direction. Assists from the front in the encirclement and destruction of Ch. forces of the pr-ka, after which, after mastering the Iasi region, it enters the second echelon and is used depending on the plan for the subsequent front-line operation. The border on the left is Kochurova, Germanovka, claim. Budeshti, Makaresti. d) No. A (OdVO) - Grosulovo's assault. Composition

- 4 sc, 12 sd, 1 tk, 4-5 tbr, 4-5 ap RGK.

Combat strength [35th, 7th, 25th, 61st rifle corps, 95th, 173rd, 51st, 147th, 46th, 30th, 64th, 144 -I, 132nd, 19th, 25th, 17th rifle divisions, tank corps, two tank and one motorized mechanized divisions, 403rd, 360th, 430th, 110th, 320th -th, 124th artillery regiments, two artillery divisions of the RGK].

Deployed at the front Grigoriopol, Glinnoe. Strikes with the left wing in the direction of Byrlad. The immediate task is to break the Chisinau group of the pr-ka and go to the front Chisinau, Leipzig and miss in the breakthrough mk.

Further - discarding the pr-ka to the north and north-west, force the river. Prut and M-10 to go to the front of Ustye, Khush [i], Falchiu [Falchiu], Leipzigskaia. The ultimate task is the encirclement and destruction of Ch. forces pr-ka with further access to the front of Focsany, Brailov [Braila].

The border on the left is B. Karpovka, Glinnoye, Leipzigskaia ...

e) Primorskaya group - the headquarters of Odessa. Composition -

1 sc, 3-4 sd. Combat strength [48th Rifle Corps, 23rd, 137th, 84th, 149th Rifle Divisions]. Task: providing the coast in the area of the Dniester Estuary, Odessa, Nikolaev, contributes to the offensive

No. A by striking with our main forces in the area north of the Dniester Estuary.

In the future, in cooperation with the naval and airborne assault forces, it destroys the pr-ka east of the river. Danube and goes to the river.

Danube. e) Horse fur. army: composition - 2 kk, 5 kd, 2 mk [2nd, 5th cavalry corps, 3rd, 5th, 14th, 16th, 9th cavalry divisions, two tank corps, four tank and two motorized divisions]. It enters the gap in the strip 12 and 5

A. It destroys the nearest operational reserves and goes to the rear of the main grouping of Romanians to the M-10 in the area Roman, Bakeu, Pyatra.

Later, acting from the rear, in cooperation with 12, 5 and No. A, destroys Ch. forces pr-ka, directing immediately one mmd to Focsani.

The front reserve should have had the 4th and 24th rifle corps, the 128th, 48th, 138th, 143rd, 126th, 113th rifle divisions, three airborne brigades and two more rifle divisions from HVO. Thus, according to Vatutin, troops from the KOVO, OdVO, KhVO, BOVO, MVO, KalVO and LVO should have been used for the operation. At the same time, several options were proposed for the combat composition of the troops necessary for the implementation of the above plan (see Table 3). Table 3 **Options for the grouping of troops for the operation against Romania**

	1-й вариант	2-й вариант	3-й вариант
Армий	4	4	4
Конно-механизированных групп	1	1	1
Стрелковых корпусов	17	15	13
Стрелковых дивизий	50	45	39
Кавалерийских корпусов	2	2	2
Кавалерийских дивизий	5	5	5
Танковых корпусов	3	3	3
Танковых дивизий	6	6	6
Моторизованных дивизий	3	3	3
Танковых бригад	15	13	12
Артиллерийских полков РК	19	17	15
Авиабригад	15	13	12
Авиаполков	60	50	50
Авиадесантных бригад	3	3	3
Понтонных батальонов	14	13	13

During the operation, the Air Force, consisting of fifteen air brigades, was supposed to "suppress the aviation of the pr-ka by fighting in the air and at airfields and ensure air supremacy from the beginning of the operation to its end to the line of Bystrits, Bucurest [Bucharest]", preventing the delivery of enemy troops from central and western regions of the country. Assist ground forces in forcing the river. Dniester and on the battlefield, as well as to destroy the naval bases of Constanta and Galati. Together with the Navy, destroy the enemy's navy and ensure dominance at sea up to the Bosphorus, as well as cover the transportation and landing of amphibious assault forces. Should have to prepare "the landing of airborne

troops: a) In the first period - in the operational depth of the armies. b) To M-10 - In the Galati region - 1 adbr and 1 sd. In the Focsani region - 1 adbr. The following tasks should have been assigned to the Black Sea Fleet: "1. Destroy the fleets and naval bases of the project and ensure complete dominance in the Black Sea. 2. Capture the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles and block the exits from them. 3. Block the Black Sea coast of Romania. 4. Cover the Black Sea coast of the USSR. 5. Prepare and land troops in the lower reaches of the river. Danube. 6. To assist from the sea the offensive of the Primorsky group, the amphibious assault until the capture of Galati b Provide food for the landing forces: sea and air.

According to Vatutin's calculations, the concentration and deployment of the Soviet grouping will last 20-27 days, and the main forces will be able to go on the offensive on the 20-21st day, even before the completion of the full concentration of the front's reserves. Within 10 days, Soviet troops must cover the enemy and go to the front:

"a) on ch. direction - to the line of Kosna, Neamtsy, Botushani [Botosani], Edinet. b) On the auxiliary direction - to the front of Ustye, Hus [i], Falchiu [Falchiu], Leipzigskaia. c) KMA - to the area of Roman, Bakeu, Piatra. d) TC - to the area of Dokolina, Byrlad. e) MMD - to the Focsani region. Landing of amphibious assault forces in the lower reaches of the river. Danube and its possession of Galati. The landing of airborne troops in the area of Focsani and Galati. Capturing the Foksha Gates. In the future, in 7 days it was supposed to completely surround and destroy the main forces of the Romanian army. In the next 5-6 days, fully reach the front of the Carpathian Mountains, Fokshany, Braila, r. Danube.

In anticipation of the operation, it was necessary "not later than 10.7.40 to create two-month stocks of food forage in the territory of Stanislav, Tarnopol, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Vinnitsa, Kirovograd, Odessa regions and the AMSSR", accumulate 6 ammunition ammunition at the advanced and district warehouses of the KOVO and OdVO and have in the warehouses of KOVO, OdVO and HVO fuel based on the month of the war. In addition to the available stocks, it was necessary to provide for the delivery of approximately 50,000 more tons of fuel for the ground troops and 20,000 tons for the Air Force. According to the

chief of staff of the KOVO, "with the successful completion of the first front-line operation, the main forces of the front are withdrawn against the Foksha Gate to deliver the main blow to Bucurest [Bucharest] with the aim of finally eliminating Romania, capturing Dobruja and further mastering European Turkey and the Dardanelles." Reporting on the above, Vatutin asked for "instructions on the further development of the operational plan"832. As you can see, the proposal of the chief of staff of the KOVO was quite radical. However, the main work on the preparation of the operation plan was carried out, of course, in the Operational Directorate of the General Staff of the Red Army. Until June 7, General of the Army G.K. Zhukov, appointed on that day by order of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 02469 commander of the KOVO833 troops and who left for Kiev the next day.

By the evening of June 9, a draft directive was prepared at the General Staff, according to which three armies were allocated for operations against Romania, whose troops were estimated at 36-38 infantry, 4 cavalry divisions, 5 mountain infantry and 1 mechanized brigades with 658 combat aircraft. The 12th army (8th, 13th, 15th, 17th rifle corps, 7th, 58th, 60th, 62nd, 72nd I, 124th, 137th, 139th, 141st, 146th, 192nd rifle divisions, 81st motorized division, 5th, 23rd, 24th, 10th, 26th, 14th, 38th Tank Brigades, 2nd and 4th Cavalry Corps, 3rd, 5th, 16th, 32nd, 34th Cavalry Divisions, 375th, 135th -th, 168th, 305th, 324th, 120th artillery regiments, 315th and 316th artillery divisions of the RGK) and the 5th army (36th, 37th and 49th rifle corps, 8th, 44th, 74th, 130th, 135th, 139th, 140th, 147th, 164th rifle divisions, 9th cavalry division, 36th tank brigade, 376th, 124th, 331st, 429th artillery regiments and 34th artillery division of the RGK). Of the OdVO troops, the 9th Army was allocated for the operation (35th, 7th and 14th rifle corps, 15th, 25th, 30th, 51st, 95th, 150th, 156 -I, 173rd, 176th rifle divisions, 4th tank brigade, 522nd, 320th, 110th, 430th artillery regiments and 39th artillery division of the RGK).

It was proposed to strike the main blow with the forces of the 12th Army from the area north of Chernivtsi in the direction of Siret. Further, one grouping of troops was to advance on Dorohoy, Costesti and along the Prut to Iasi, and the other - on Suceava and along the river. Siret on Roman, Bacau, Mareshesti, Galati, Braila and Izmil. By the end of the first day of the operation, the mechanized units were to occupy Dorohoy, by the end of the second day - Andriesheni, and by the end of the 3rd day - Iasi and Khushi. The troops of the 5th Army were to advance from Studenica to the Briceni-Lipkani front and further to Balti. The 9th Army, with its 35th Rifle Corps, was to advance on Chisinau and further on Khushi. The 30th Infantry Division was to cross the Dniester Estuary and attack Akkerman and Sarata, while the 150th Division was planned to be transferred from the Crimea on the ships of the Black Sea Fleet and landed in the Zhebriyan region⁸³⁴. In further versions of the plan,

there was an increase in the troops involved in the operation and a reduction in the tasks facing them⁸³⁵. So, the command of the 55th Rifle Corps was introduced into the 9th Army, and the amphibious assault at Zhebriyan should have been prepared from units of the 74th Rifle Division deployed in the Odessa region. The Black Sea Fleet was originally planned to be assigned the following tasks:

"a) Organize an uninterrupted and reliable patrol service by submarines, aircraft and light forces in the Black Sea near the Bosphorus and be ready to quickly lay minefields near the Bosphorus; b) Destroy the Romanian military and navy both in navigation and in military bases; c) Block all the coast and ports of Romania (Constanta and others); d) On the first day, firmly close the Danube arm from possible attempts to pass through the Danube by armed ships of Romania; e) To provide assistance and assistance to the troops of the 9th army in crossing the river. Dniester through the spit in the Dniester estuary;

f) Organize the transportation and landing of the 74th division division from Odessa to the Zhebriyana region. On June 13, from 13.20 to 14.30, a meeting of the top military-political leadership was held in the Kremlin, which was attended by I.V. Stalin, V.M. Molotov, People's Commissar of Defense Marshal S.K. Timoshenko, Chief of the General Staff Marshal B.M. Shaposhnikov, his deputy lieutenant general I.V. Smorodinov, head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, army commissar of the 1st rank L.Z. Mekhlis, commanders of the troops and members of the Military Councils of the KOVO - General of the Army G.K. Zhukov, Corps Commissar V.N. Borisov and OdVO - Lieutenant General I.V. Boldin and Corps Commissar A.F. Kolobyakov, People's Commissar of the Navy Admiral N.G. Kuznetsov, Chief of the Main Naval Staff Admiral L.M. Galler and the commander of the Black Sea Fleet, Rear Admiral F.S. October 837. Unfortunately, the materials of this meeting are still secret, but it is quite obvious that it was about the preparation of an operation against Romania. In particular, the leadership of the Navy insisted on a sharp reduction in tasks for the Black Sea Fleet, and this section of the plan was prepared personally by Haller⁸³⁸. It was decided not to carry out an amphibious assault near Zhebriyan (this idea was implemented on August 24, 1944 during the Iasi-Chisinau operation). In addition, the issue of creating an operational association of the Black Sea Fleet on the Danube River - the Danube military flotilla, the creation of which began four days later, was resolved.

The result of all this work was the directive of the People's Commissar of Defense and the Chief of the General Staff No. 101396 / ss, which Lieutenant Colonel Shikin and Major Ryzhaev, who arrived by plane from Moscow at 21.45 on June 20, 1940, handed over to the commander of the KOVO troops, General of the Army

G.K. Zhukov. "I order: 1. Start concentrating troops and be ready by 10 p.m. on June 24 for a decisive offensive in order to defeat the Romanian army and occupy Bessarabia. 2. When concentrating, have the following grouping: a) 12th Army - Army Commander Lieutenant General Comrade. Cherevichenko, Deputy commander - general lieutenant comrade.

Parusinov. Army headquarters - Kolomyia. Deploy army troops: directorates of 13th, 8th, 17th rifle corps; 139, 60, 62, 124, 72, 58, 146, 131 and 81 rifle divisions; 5, 10, 23, 24, 26 and 38 tank brigades; 135, 168, 305, 324, 375 and 376 artillery regiments of the RGK; 315 and 316 artillery divisions in the area of Kuta, Snyatyn,

Stetsova, Kolomyia. Directorate of the 15th Rifle Corps, 7th and 141st Rifle Divisions, 120th Artillery Regiment of the RGK in the

Filipkovtsy, Novosyulka-Kostyukova.

Directorates of the 2nd and 4th cavalry corps, 3rd, 5th, 16th and 34th cavalry divisions in the area of Jablonow, Gvozdets, Podgaychiki, Kolomyia.

192 rifle division in the area - Ustseryki, Polyanki, Kishvoruvnya. Army

aviation - five SB regiments, two light bomber regiments and eight fighter regiments. The dividing line between the

12th and 5th armies: the Zbruch river, Khotyn, Lipkany, all points inclusive for the 12th army. b) 5th army - the commander of the

army, lieutenant general comrade. Gerasimenko, Deputy commander - major general comrade Advisers.

Headquarters -

Dunaevtsy. Army troops to

deploy: Directorate of the 49th Rifle Corps, 80th, 44th and 135th Rifle Divisions; 36 and 49 tank brigades, 137 and 331 artillery regiments and the 34th artillery division of the RGK in the area - Bagovitsa, Studenitsa, St. Ushitsa, Krushanovka.

Management of the 36th Rifle Corps, 169th and 130th Rifle Divisions at the front of Kalus, Yampol.

Kamenetz-Podolsky and Mogilev-Yampolsky fortified areas in their areas. Army aviation - two

SB regiments, one light bomber regiment and three fighter regiments. The dividing line of the army on the

left is the Savranka River, st. Popelyukhi, Kamenka, Kopacheni, Pyrlitsa, all

points inclusive for the 9th army.

c) 9th Army - Army Commander Lieutenant General Comrade. Boldin, Deputy commander - lieutenant general comrade. Kozlov. Army

Headquarters - Grosulovo.

Deploy army troops: 140

rifle division on the front B. Molokish, Rybnitsa, Gederim. Directorates of

the 35th, 37th and 7th Rifle Corps, 173rd, 176th, 30th, 164th, 51st, 95th, 147th, 150th and 15th Rifle Divisions; 21 tank brigades, 522, 110, 320, 124, 430, 439 artillery regiments and 317 artillery divisions of the RGK in the area - Dubossary, Tiraspol, Ploskoe, Shibka.

Management of the 5th cavalry corps, 9th and 32nd cavalry divisions, 4th and 14th tank brigades in the area - Karmanovo, Pavlovka, Kassel. Directorate of

the 55th Rifle Corps - Odessa, 25th and 74th Rifle Divisions in the area - Ovidiopol, Dalnik

(southern), Baraboy; 116 rifle division - Odessa. Rybnitsa

and Tiraspol fortified areas in their areas. From June 22, the northwestern

fortified area becomes subordinate to the commander of the 9th army. Part

northwestern fortified area to transfer the Dnieper military flotilla.

Army aviation - one DB regiment, five SB regiments, one light bomber regiment and six fighter regiments

regiments.

d) Front reserve - 8, 17 and 86 rifle divisions in the area - Chertkov, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Dunaevtsy and 100 rifle division in the area - Vasilievka, Frunzovka, Calm.

Arriving in the district 301, 318, 360 and 403 artillery regiments of the RGK should be used to reinforce the

12th and 5th armies. 3. To command troops from the Department of the Kyiv Special Military District, allocate a department Southern front. Front Commander - General of the Army comrade. Zhukov.

Front headquarters -

Proskurov. To assist and promote the success of the 12th and 9th armies, the Commander of the Front has at his disposal three air regiments of DB and four regiments of TB for airborne

landings. 4. The Black Sea Navy from 22:00 June 21, 1940 to subordinate operationally

Commander of the Southern Front.

5. According to intelligence data, ROMANIA currently has on the territory of BESSARABIA and BUKOVINA up to 21 infantry divisions and 3 cavalry divisions.

6. The task of the troops of the Southern Front is to deliver the main blow from Kolomyia to Chernivtsi and further along the Prut River to the south and an auxiliary blow from the east to Chisinau, Khushi to encircle and capture the Romanian troops deployed in BESSARABIA. Why

should the armies set the task of: a) 12

armies - with the main forces, at least 9 rifle divisions, with tank units, with the support of strong artillery and all aviation of the army, break through the enemy's position on the front of Chernoguz, Russish-Banil, Zelena, Hliveste and advance along the river Prut to Chernivtsi. To develop success, throw a cavalry-mechanized group into the gap consisting of two cavalry corps, all tank brigades of the army, with the direct and constant support of army aviation, develop an offensive by this group along the Prut River and take decisive actions by the end of the second day to reach the Dorokhoy, Darabani front. By the end of the fourth day, take possession of the Yasha [Yasi] area, establish interaction with units of the 9th Army, encircle and prevent the enemy from retreating to Romania. With rifle corps, consolidating the success of mechanized units and cavalry, with a swift offensive, encircle and destroy the Romanian troops stationed in the northern part of Bessarabia.

b) 5th Army - 49th Rifle Corps, consisting of three rifle divisions, two tank brigades, two artillery regiments and one artillery division of the RGK, with the assistance of aviation, cross the Dniester River in the Tsviklevtsy, Studenitsa, St. Ushitsa and develop an offensive against the Larga station, Balashinesti, encircle the enemy located to the west of Radautsi with joint actions with the 12th army. In the future, interacting with units of the 12th Army, advance south along the Prut River.

36 Rifle Corps, consisting of two rifle divisions, on the first day demonstrating crossings across the Dniester River at the Kalus front to Mogilev-Podolsky, from the morning of the second day, force the Dniester River in the Yampol, Soroca region and advance in the direction of Balti.

c) 9th army - demonstrating the crossing of the Dniester River by the 140th rifle division in the Rybnitsa region, the main forces consisting of 35th, 37th and 7th rifle corps, 5th cavalry corps, 4th, 14th and 21st tank brigades, with the assistance of strong artillery and all aviation of the army, force the Dniester River at the front of Cellars, Tiraspol and, delivering the main blow south of Chisinau to Khushi, together with the cavalry-mechanized group of the 12th Army, to surround and destroy the enemy in the northern part of Bessarabia. On the first day, with mechanized units and cavalry, go to the Bardar, Ginchesti, Mileshti-Mich area. Rifle units to occupy the city of Chisinau. With the development of the offensive, allocate at least two rifle divisions [in] a barrier to the southwest and south to protect against possible enemy counterattacks from southern Bessarabia. 55 Rifle Corps, with the assistance of the Black Sea Fleet, capture

the Bugaz lighthouse, occupy Akkerman and continue the offensive on Sarat.

Protect the Black Sea coast from Odessa to Ochakov inclusive. d) The troops of the Southern Front, after occupying the area of Yasha, Khushi, Chisinau, continue a decisive offensive along the eastern bank of the Prut River, capture Cahul and Reni and, advancing south from Chisinau, encircle the enemy in southern Bessarabia north of the Danube. 55 Rifle Corps to develop an offensive along the northern bank of the Danube to the west, contributing to the encirclement of the enemy in southern Bessarabia.

7. By order of the front, prepare an airborne assault for a joint strike with units of the 12th Army in the Tirgu-Frumos area. The landing should be carried out only after mechanized units have entered the area. 8. To set the main tasks of aviation: a) close interaction with the

troops on the battlefield; b) a strike on enemy groupings facing our units; c) to assist the advancement of our units by assault actions and, first of all,

mechanized units and cavalry; d)

destruction of enemy aircraft at airfields; e) attacking suitable enemy columns and their headquarters; f) covering the areas of concentration of their troops; g) airborne assault. 9. Set the task for the Black

Sea Fleet: a) to assist the troops of the 9th Army with naval artillery fire when crossing the Dniester River the spit of the Dniester estuary and with further advance along the Black Sea coast;

b) to prevent the appearance and actions of enemy ships along the sections of the coast occupied by the troops of the 9th Army; c)

establish surveillance over the ports of Romania, block the Black Sea coast from the Dniester liman up to the Sulinsky branch of the Danube inclusive;

d) secure the Black Sea coast (the area of the Odessa naval base and the Ochakov sector coastal defense) from the actions of enemy ships.

10. To ensure this operation, raise the posts of VNOS KOVO, OdVO and the city of Kiev (without local air defense systems) in the manner of training camps, without noise, personal calls and organize air defense of the most important points, warehouses, airfields and areas of concentration of troops.

11. The actions of the troops must be bold, quick and decisive. When meeting with an enemy be limited to frontal strikes, but to cover its flanks, surround and capture.

By quick and decisive actions of mechanized units and cavalry, destroy communications, capture headquarters and disorganize the rear. Work out in

advance the organization of the protection of captured cities, appoint the heads of garrisons in advance and to ensure order from the first days of the occupation of cities.

The time of transition to the offensive will be specified additionally.

12. In the development of this directive, develop a plan of action for the troops of the front, work it out with the commanders buildings. Submit the action plan for approval by June 23, 1940. "839 At 22.40 on

June 20, the Chief of the General Staff informed the commander of the OdVO troops that "from 10 o'clock on June 21 you are subordinate to the Commander of the KOVO, General of the Army Zhukov"840. The next day, the People's Commissar of the Navy, Admiral Kuznetsov, ordered the Military Council of the Black Sea Fleet "from 22:00 on June 21 to transfer to the operational subordination of the commander of the Kyiv Special Military District. Commander of the Odessa Naval Base to become subordinate to the Commander of the Odessa Military District. Arriving from Kyiv to

Kherson to the first division of monitors to be transferred to the operational subordination of the commander of the Odessa naval base "841 .

The headquarters of the KOVO undertook to refine the version of the plan for the upcoming operation prepared for June 17. On June 19, in Proskurov, special classes were held for the Military Councils of the armies and corps commanders, at which they were acquainted with the nature and plan of the operation and received instructions on the specifics of the combat training of troops and rear services. On the same day, the commander of the KOVO troops issued order No. D / 007 on the treatment of prisoners of war, according to which officers and non-commissioned officers were to be escorted to camps on the eastern side of the Dniester, and soldiers were to be used in the occupied territory for work on the restoration of railways. Prisoners of war were required to be placed in barracks or tents, primarily trophy ones, and fed at the rate of rear rations. "It is strictly forbidden for anyone, without the permission of the Military Council of the KOVO, to disband the prisoners of war, no matter what nationality and place of residence they may be"842. On June 21, Zhukov signed order No. 00126/ss, according to which the heads and commissars of garrisons and their administrations were appointed for the cities of Chernivtsi, Hertsu, Siret, Radautsy, Dorohoi, Khotyn, Soroca, Balti, Chisinau, Izmail, Orhei, Akkerman, Bendery and Cahul843. The order put into effect the "Instruction to the Chief of the Red Army Garrison", approved by Zhukov on June 19, according to which: "1. The head of the garrison is a representative of the Soviet power - civil and military. 2. The head of the garrison is obliged to: a) Organize and maintain the strictest

revolutionary order in the garrison. b) Immediately after taking office, check whether the most important objects in the garrison have been captured:

telegraph, telephone, radio stations, railway. station, power plant, water supply system, barracks, airfields, oil and gas storage facilities, clear these objects of hostile elements and organize their protection.

c) Establish a wartime regime in the garrison, not allowing people to appear on the streets later than 21:00 and before 07:00. Walking at this time is allowed only with special passes issued by the Head of the garrison. Street demonstrations, rallies, meetings can be held

only with the permission of the Head of the garrison. d) Organize the seizure of firearms and cold steel from organizations and individuals. e) To prevent and suppress all attempts at armed uprisings, sabotage, robbery, violence, looting, agitation hostile to Soviet power, the spread of false and panic rumors, from whomever

sides they neither proceeded.

f) Maintain constant communication with the operational points of the NKVD and assist them in their work by all available means.

g) Take into account all the premises that can be used and adapted for accommodation military units, apartments of commanders, clubs, canteens, warehouses, garages, stables, etc.

h) Organize the reception, accounting, storage and protection of trophy property. i) Organize the normal operation of all institutions of the city economy and trade establishments. j) Organize political and educational work among the population. k) Organize the security of places of detention, preventing the release of prisoners of any nationality without prior authorization from the NKVD. *The head of the garrison has the right to:* a) Issue orders and separate orders, binding on all institutions and individuals. Failure to comply with the orders and orders of the Head of the garrison or evasion of execution are punished to the fullest extent of the revolutionary law of wartime.

b) Conduct searches and arrests. Stop all attempts at armed resistance immediately, without stopping before using weapons. On June 21, the commander of the KOVO troops issued order No. D / 009 on the creation of trophy commissions to organize the collection, accounting and evacuation of trophy property844 .

On June 22-23, the Military Councils of the 12th, 5th and 9th armies, on the basis of draft directives of the command of the Southern Front No. A-1 / 00144ss / s and No. A-1 / 00145ss / s, worked on the ground with the commanders of corps and divisions issues of occupying the starting position, organizing the upcoming offensive, interaction between the combat arms, command and control, communications, rear arrangements and actions for the next stage of the operation. With the rest of the command staff, these issues were worked out the day before the start of the operation845 . At

5:00 pm on June 23, Colonel Danilov arrived at the General Staff from Kyiv, who delivered draft directive documents of the command of the Southern Front for approval by the People's Commissar of Defense and the Chief of the General Staff. First of all, it was document No. A-1 / 00138 / ss / s, containing the "Plan of the operation of the Southern Front to encircle and capture the armed forces of Romania concentrated in Northern Bessarabia":

"I. *The task of the Southern Front.*

Surround and capture the armed forces of Romania, located in the northern part of Bessarabia, and, developing their operations to the south, clear Bessarabia of the enemy.

II. *Evaluation of the forces and intentions of*

the enemy. The Romanians concentrated against the USSR up to 26 infantry divisions, 2–3 cd, 1–

2 mkhbr and up to 640 aircraft. Hiding behind small forces in the central part of the river. Dniester, Romanians have mainly three major

groupings: two on the flanks of the front to cover the Chernivtsi and Chisinau directions and one as a reserve of the front, in the operational rear behind the center of the so-called Eastern Front.

According to the Intelligence Directorate, the strength of these groups is determined: Chernivtsi up to 8–9 frontiers, Chisinau up to 5–6 pd and front reserve - 4–5 pd, 1 mkhbr and 1–2 cd.

Directly along the river Dniester in the Balti direction can be expected no more than 1 pd and 1 cd. Up to 3 infantry divisions, the Romanians are forced to keep the Black Sea coast on the defensive. In addition, a reserve army is being created in the Focsana region, where new forces are concentrated: on 20.6. as part of this army, up to 6 infantry divisions and 1 mkhbr are noted, the rate of further strengthening of this army can be up to 0.5–1 division per day.

In total, in Bessarabia and Bukovina, enemy forces are estimated at 21 infantry divisions, 3 cd and 1 mkhbr. Based on this enemy grouping, its average operational density can be: a) in the Chernivtsi direction - 22 km per 1 forward and 3.4 guns per 1 km. b) on the Chisinau direction - 28 km per 1 frontier and 1.6 guns per 1 km. c) in the Balti direction - 58 km per 1 front line and 0.3 guns per 1 km. Enemy engineering fortifications mainly go along the river. Dniester,

Prut, Seret [Siret], creating difficult barriers when operating from east to west. In the Chernivtsi direction, there is a strong fortified area on the outskirts of Chernivtsi and a prepared cut-off position along the Bergomet-Storozhinets line. It is possible that there may be bunkers in this area. The probable plan of action of the enemy is active defense. Relying on their strong flanks and prepared and advantageous lines of the river. Dniester, Prut and Seret [Siret], the enemy will

probably look for solutions by striking our advancing groupings. The most dangerous direction for us of a possible enemy counterattack is a strike from the south on the flank of the 12th Army. This area requires special attention and constant support.

III. *Evaluation of directions and terrain.* In

accordance with the task of the front, the execution of an operation can develop along three operational lines.

directions: a) In

the Chernivtsi-Yassky direction, between the river. Seret [Siret] and Prut. This operational direction is operationally beneficial, as it leads to the rear of the entire enemy grouping located on the territory of Northern Bessarabia. The capacity of this operational direction is up to 4–5 sk. The number of through tracks, taking into account all country roads, is 7, which provides each building with almost two roads; good roads - only two.

The main obstacles of operational importance are the prepared line along the river. Cheremosh, Prut and forests s.–z. frontier Dear, Dorabani.

b) Kamenets-Podolsk-Baltsy operational direction. There are only two good through roads from north to south, more than 7 field roads. Barrier of operational significance - r. Dniester. The ground is impassable during rainy seasons. This operational direction, according to the plan of the operation, is operationally unprofitable, since actions in this direction they push the enemy and exclude his environment.

c) Chisinau-Yasi direction - the shortest direction leading to the deep rear of the enemy and his entire northern grouping. However, this operationally profitable operational direction has three large and insurmountable obstacles: pp. Dniester, Prut and Seret [Siret].

With the development of actions in the Chisinau-Hushinsky direction, a strong support for actions is necessary troops from a strike from southern Bessarabia.

IV. *The purpose of the*

operation. A simultaneous strike of 12 A from Kolomyia to Dorohoy and further south along the river. Prut and 9 A from the east to Khushi, Iasi, bypassing Chisinau from the south, encircle and capture the Romanian troops deployed in the northern part of Bessarabia; after which, a decisive offensive to the south along the river. Prut, encircle the enemy in the southern part of Bessarabia north of the river. Danube.

V. *Grouping of forces.* [Cm. table 4.] *The 12th*

army is deployed on the front from Ustseryka to the mouth of the river. Zbruch, having the main grouping on the site Kutu, Dzuruw, Sniatyn. Border

on the left - r. Zbruch, Khotyn, Lipkany, r. Prut (all for 12 A) ... *5th Army* - deployed

from the mouth of the river. Zbruch to Kamenka (80 km southeast of Soroca on the Dniester River), having the main grouping on the site Tsviklevisy, Star. Ushitsa. The border

between the 12th and 5th armies of the river. Zbruch, Khotyn, Lipkany, all points for 12 A inclusive ... **The 9th army** is deployed from Kamenka to the mouth of the river. Dniester, having the main grouping in the Dubossary, Tiraspol section. The border between the

5th and 9th armies: r. Savranka, st. Popelyuhi, Kamenka, Kopacheni, Pyrlitsa, all points incl. for the 9th army ...

Table 4

Planned grouping of troops of the Southern Front

Армии	Корпуса	Дивизии, бригады, арtpолки	Орудия	Танки	Броне-машины
12-я	13-й СК	139-я, 60-я, 62-я СД; 23-я, 24-я тбр; 376-й, 168-й, 305-й арtp РГК	446	407	50
	8-й СК	124-я, 72-я, 146-я СД; 5-я, 10-я, 26-я тбр; 324-й, 375-й, 135-й арtp, 316-й арtdив РГК	396	459	60
	17-й СК	131-я, 58-я СД; 38-я тбр; 315-й арtdив РГК	294	168	—
	15-й СК	7-я, 141-я СД; 120 арtp РГК	250	46	—
	КМГ	2-й (3-я, 5-я КД), 4-й (16-я, 34-я КД) КК, 81-я МСД	172	253	48
		192-я СД	40	—	—
Всего			1 598	1 303*	158
5-я	49-й СК	44-я, 80-я, 135-я СД; 36-я, 49-я тбр; 137-й, 331-й арtp, 34-й арtdив РГК	349	259	26
	36-й СК	169-я, 130-я СД; 330-й арtp РГК	180	2	—
Всего			529	261	26
9-я		140-я СД, 381 арtp	107	4	—
	35-й СК	173-я, 95-я СД; 522-й арtp РГК	225	—	—
	37-й СК	30-я, 147-я, 176-я СД; 14-я, 21-я тбр; 317-й, 110-й, 124-й, 320-й, 203-й арtp РГК	443	328	27
	7-й СК	164-я, 51-я СД; 4-й тбр; 430-й, 429-й, 397-й арtp РГК	263	248	—
	КМГ	9-я, 32-я КД; 15-я МСД	64	96	—
	55-й СК	25-я, 74-я СД	78	100	—
		150-я СД (резерв)	66	—	—
Всего			1 246	776	27
Итого			3 373	2 340	211
* Ожидалось еще 300 танков на пополнение некомплекта.					

VI. Operation planning. The task of

the front is performed by one front operation. The scope of the operation: the width of the front is 540 km, the depth of the operation is up to 300 km, the duration of the operation is 11–12 days. *Preparatory stage* -

Preparation of the operation and occupation by armies on the night before the onset of the initial provisions.

Stage 1 - The defeat of the opposing enemy forces, the entry into the breakthrough of the KMG on the front of the 12th and 9th armies and the exit rifle corps of the armies into the operational depth. The duration of the stage is two days.

Stage 2 - Exit of KMG 12 and 9 armies to the Iasi region and completion of the operational encirclement of the Romanian army in Northern Bessarabia. The

duration of the stage is two days. *Stage 3* -

Tactical completion of the encirclement and capture of the enemy. Regrouping of forces for action on the encirclement of the Romanian troops in South Bessarabia. The

duration of the stage is two days. *Stage 4* -

Actions in Southern Bessarabia. Duration 5–6 days.

VII. The course of development of the operation and the tasks of the troops in

stages. 12 army. The 12th Army performs the main task in the general plan of the front's operation. Delivering the main blow from Kolomyia to Chernivtsi, the troops of 12 A have the immediate task of destroying the Chernivtsi grouping together with 5 A and in the future, developing success on Iasi along the river. Prut, in cooperation with 9 A, surround and capture the entire grouping of Romanian troops in the northern part of Bessarabia.

The fulfillment of this task by the troops of the 12th army is ensured primarily by the successful actions of the KMG, thrown into the gap since the morning of the second day of the war.

On the appointed day, the troops of the 12th Army, supported by strong artillery and close and constant air support, strike with forces of up to nine infantry divisions with all tank formations on the Chernoguz, Russki-Banyliv, Hliveste front in the general direction of Chernivtsi. By the end of the B-1, they have the task of reaching the line of Komaresti, Bobeshti, Drachinets, in order to let the KMG into the breakthrough in the morning of B-2, consisting of 2 and 4 cc and all tank brigades of the army with landing detachments on tanks (landing detachment of 7 people per BT and 4 people on T-26 shooters and a sapper), tentatively at the Storozhinets, Mikhalche front. To transfer the tank brigades to the KMG, the latter, by order of the Commander of 12 A, are concentrated by the end of B-1 in the areas: two brigades -

Storozhinets, one Bobeshti brigade and two in the Drachinets region. Simultaneously

with the KMG, the 81st Motor Rifle Division with the BT tank brigade is introduced into the breakthrough in the direction of Storozhinets and beyond to the south, ensuring the movement of the army from the side of the river. Seret [Siret] and cutting off the enemy's retreat to the west.

By the end of B-2, the troops of 12 A have the task of reaching: KMG - the line of Dorokhoy, Darabani, 81 motor rifle divisions with the BT brigade - the district of Bresht, Buchenya, Popen; rifle corps - line Khliboka, Molodna, Sankoutsy. 192

Guards Rifle Division, covering the flank of 12 A, advances on Seletin. Upon reaching this area, the barrier detachment covers the Seletin - Ustse-Putilas direction, and the main forces go to the Vikoverkhin area. In the future, the 192nd Guards Rifle Division enters the reserve of the 12th Army.

For reliable supply of the army from the direction of Suceava by order of the commander of the 12th army advances through Chudyn 139th Rifle Division with the task of occupying and defending the Kostitsa, Seret [Siret] line.

By the end of B-3, 12 A, developing success in a southerly direction, KMG reaches the Trusheshti, Uricheni region, having 81 motorized rifle divisions with a brigade in the Belusheni region. By the same time, KMG 9 A has the task of reaching the Iasi region. Thus, by the end of B-3, the operational encirclement of the enemy is brewing, and in order to eliminate the only possibility of the enemy leaving the encirclement on the night of B-4 through Pashkany, it is planned to throw two adbrs into the Tirgu-Frumos area with the task of joint actions of the adbr and 81 motor rifle divisions with the brigade allow the enemy to withdraw to the west and secure the KMG from the side of Pashkana. In V-4, KMG 12 A captures the Iasi area and, in cooperation

with 9 A, completes the operational encirclement of the enemy. On the same day, 3 adbrs are thrown into the Totoeshti area with the task of finally cutting off the escape routes of Iasi and Pashkany.

According to the plan of action, rifle corps 12 A go to B-6 in the area of operations of the KMG and, having allocated part of the forces for tactical encirclement and capture of the enemy, together with the 5th and 9th armies. The rest of the forces and KMG, without delay, continue to move in a southerly direction to fulfill the further task of the front. 13 sk, as it advances, deploys 60 and 62 rifle divisions along the river.

Seret [Siret] in order to cover the rear of 12 and 5 A when they operate in a southerly direction. *5th army*. The immediate task of 5 A is to encircle and capture the Chernivtsi grouping of the enemy

by joint actions with 12 A; in the future, advancing along the east. bank of the river Prut in cooperation with 12 and 9 A, encircle the Romanian troops in the northern part of Bessarabia.

49 sc crosses the river. Dniester at the front of Bagovitsa, Star. Ushitsa and develops an offensive in the direction of Art. Larga, Balasinesti. Upon completion of the immediate task, further actions of the 49th brigade are developing along the east. bank of the river Prut with the task of actively tying up units of the Romanian army operating in the northern part of Bessarabia and preventing them from retreating to the west until the outflanking mobile group 12 A leaves.

36 sk, demonstrating on the first day by the forces of the reinforced regiment, in cooperation with parts of the UR, a crossing over the river. Dniester in the Kalus region, Mogilev-Podolsk, in the morning B-2, the main forces of the corps force the river. Dniester near Yampol, Soroca. Advancing on Balti, the corps has a task similar to 49 sk. By the end of B-6, Corps 5 A enter into direct

tactical interaction between themselves and units 12 and 9 A, completing the tactical encirclement and capture of the enemy in the area southwest of Balti.

Upon completion of the immediate task of the front of the corps of the 5th army, they pass into the reserve of the front and concentrate in area north of Iasi. *9th army*.

Tasks 9

A, inflicting the main blow south of Chisinau in the direction of Khushi, encircle in cooperation with 12 and 5 A and the Romanian troops stationed in the northern part of Bessarabia.

The immediate task of 9 A is to force the river. Dniester and capture the city of Chisinau, covering their further actions by advancing a barrier with forces of up to two divisions in a southerly direction against possible enemy counterattacks from south.

The main forces of 9 A are forcing the river. Dniester at the front Cellars, Tiraspol and with direct and close air support seize the city of Chisinau.

With the release of the main forces to the front of Chimisheny, Novo-Nikolaevka, let the KMG as part of the 5 cc all tank brigades of the army and 15 motor rifle divisions pass.

55 SC from the area of Ovidiopol, Roksolany, Baraboy crosses the Dniester estuary and, with the support of the Black Sea Fleet, takes possession of Akkerman and the Bugaz lighthouse. By the end of B-1, troops

of 9 A go out: KMG to the Gancheshty, Mileshty, Bardar region, rifle corps to the line: Chisinau, Jemana, Novo-Kaushani.

KMG, 35 and 37 sk develop success in the western direction; 7 ck advances into the screen with a task, advancing a ledge behind the left flank of the main forces of the army in the southwest. direction, secure them from the south.

55th Rifle Corps (25th and 74th Rifle Division) advances in the direction of Sarat in close and constant cooperation with the Navy. 140 sd in the

morning B-1 forces the river. Dniester in the area: Rybnitsa with a task - to connect with active actions the opposing enemy and prevent his retreat to the west.

By the end of B-2, army troops: KMG is forcing the river. Prut and is concentrated in the area north of Khushi. The rifle corps of the main grouping reach the line of Trushany, Girly, Mileshty; 55 sc - p. Sarata,

having mastered Kol[oniya] Old[aya] Sarat. The 140th division enters the line of Pechesty,

Kuyzovka. Further actions of KMG on zap. bank of the river Prut in the direction of Iasi and turn 35 sk to the north, part 9 A enter into operational interaction with parts of 12 A, squeezing the encirclement of the enemy.

By B-6, the tactical encirclement of the enemy ends with the 35th brigades reaching the line: Koshena-Flocheny, Buchumeny and 140 sd - Glingen, Teura. 55

sk, reaching the boundary of the river. Kogilnik, goes on the defensive until the further task of the front is completed.

The main forces upon reaching the river. The Prut provide a foothold on the western bank of the river. Rod with the capture of Khushi.

From B-6 troops of 9 A, leaving 35 sk and 140 sd to complete the capture of the Romanian troops in the northern part Bessarabia, proceed to carry out the further task of the front - to actions to the south along the river. Rod.

VIII. *Basing and tasks of aviation.*

Aircraft basing according to the attached map. Air Force

tasks: 1)

Close and direct interaction of the Air Force with ground forces on the field during a breakthrough of a fortified lanes of the enemy and in the development of success.

2) Struggle for air supremacy by massed aviation operations on airfields and air combat against enemy air force. Depth of impact on airfields to the eastern spurs of the Carpathians.

3) Covering KMG and the main grouping 12 and 9 A. Assistance and direct support to KMG 12 A by all the forces of the Air Force 12, 5 A and the Air Force of the front. 4)

Violation of enemy command and control, destruction of his headquarters and destruction of communication lines aircraft with cats.

5) Prohibition of advancing enemy reserves into the area of operations of the front armies from the side of Klausenberg, Iasi, Roman, Byrlad.

6) Establishment of continuous observation of the movement of advanced units by assigning special aircraft and squadrons of observation and communications ... Bombing and shelling at settlements not occupied by enemy troops is prohibited. [...]

XI. *Front reserve.*

The reserve of the front is: 8 RD - Chertkov, 17 RD - Kamenetz-Podolsk, 86 RD - Dunaevtsy, 100 RD - Vasilievka, Frunzovka. 8th, 17th

and 86th Rifle Divisions, upon their arrival and concentration, with the development of the operation, will follow in the direction of the main attack of the front, having the mission of reinforcing the army troops operating in the decisive direction. Separation of the reserves of the army of the first echelon - 50-60 km.

XII. *Naval Forces of the Black Sea Fleet.* For the purpose

of closer interaction between land and sea forces, the Black Sea Navy in the operational regards, from 10.00 23.6 to the Military Council of the 9th Army. The

tasks set before the Black Sea Fleet are: 1) Direct and close

cooperation with the 55th Corps for the protection of the Black Sea coast Odessa, Ochakov. 2) Fire assistance of naval artillery of the 25th and 74th rifle divisions (55 sk) when they force the Dniester the estuary and with the further development of the offensive along the Black Sea coast.

3) Exclusion of the possibility of the appearance and actions of enemy ships along the sections of the coast occupied by troops of 9 A.

4) Observation of the ports of Romania, blocking the Black Sea coast from the Dniester estuary to Sulinsky branch of the river. Danube inclusive.

[...]

Evacuation of prisoners:

6 points of acceptance and transfer of prisoners of war of the NKVD are being deployed: Snyatyn - 100 people, Kamenetz-Podolsk - 500 people, Mogilev-Podolsk - 300 people, Rybnitsa - 300 people, Tiraspol - 500 people, Ovidiopol - 300 people POW camps: Kozelshchina,

Poltava region, Putivl, Sumy region, Starobelsk. duration of stay

prisoners of war at transfer points 1-2 days.

Within 10 days, an average of 20,000-25,000 prisoners can be passed through the transfer points. Collection and evacuation of trophy property: 1) For the

collection and accounting of trophy property, they are allocated in parts of the team, according to a special directive of the Komtroy.

2) Recorded trophy property is sorted by type and purpose and protected until evacuation. 3) The evacuation of trophy property goes back empty through the DEPs to the corresponding public warehouses s/s. Sending property is on the waybill for each type of property.

4) Captured property is stored and accounted for separately in the government warehouses and sent to the rear along order of the supplying departments of the armies on the instructions of the Military Council

"846 . In addition, a draft directive of the command of the Southern Front No. A-1 / 00144 ss / s was delivered to Moscow:

"First. Focusing on the Chernivtsi direction up to seven front, one GSB, one cd; in the direction of Balti,

lasi up to 3 pd and 2 cd; in the Chisinau region and to the south to 6 front and two cd, the Romanian army continues to strengthen at the turn of the river. Cheremosh, Dniester, Prut and Seret [Siret].

Second. According to the directive of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR on the state border with Romania troops of the Southern Front are being deployed as part of the 12th, 5th and 9th armies.

The naval forces of the Black Sea are transferred from 22.00 21.6 to the operational subordination of the Military Council Southern front.

The command of the troops of the Southern Front was entrusted to me by the People's Commissar of Defense. *Third.* 12

A. Army Commander - Lieutenant General Comrade Cherevichenko, Deputy. commander - general Lieutenant Comrade Parusinov.

Army headquarters - Kolomyia.

Deploy army troops: 13 sk (139, 60, 62 sd, 23 and 24 brigade, 376, 168, 305 ap RGK; 1 tank b-n KV); 8 sc (72, 124, 146 sd; 5, 10, 26 brigade; 324, 375, 135 ap, 316 artillery div of the RGK); 17th Rifle Corps (58th and 131st Rifle Divisions, 38th Tank Brigade; 315th Artillery Division of the RGK) - in the area of Kuta, Snyatyn, Stetsova, Kolomyia - to deliver the main blow in the direction of Chernivtsi.

15 sk - 7, 141 sd, 120 ap RGK in the area of Gorodenka, Filipkovtsy, Novosyulka-Kostyukov for an offensive in the direction of Chernivtsi from the side of Horodenka (7th rifle division) and Sinkow (141 rifle division).

To ensure the right wing of the front, deploy the 192nd Guards Rifle Division in the Usceryka, Polyanka, Kishvoruvnya area for actions in the direction of Seletin.

The army commander to concentrate the Cavalry group (2 and 4 kk) in a waiting area - in the forests of the south-east. Kolomyia, meaning to introduce it into a breakthrough in the direction of Volo. By the time of entry into the gap, all tank brigades and 81 rifle divisions should be subordinated to the Commander of the Cavalry Group. Army aviation: 13, 16, 94 sbp, 138 lbp,

3 and 7 shap, 33, 91, 28, 23, 149, 12, 17, 46 iap (air defense - Stryi); 5 and 8 diae; 36 and 44 Rae; arm. rae - 16 sbp. Include in the army: 19 and 21 Mon.; 9, 17, 45 eng. battalions, 6

masks. company. Borders on the left - r. Zbruch, Khotyn, Lipkany, all for 12A inclusive. *Fourth.* 5 A.

Commander - Lieutenant General Comrade Gerasimenko, Deputy. Commander - Major

General Comrade Sovetnikov. Army Headquarters - Dunaevtsy. Deploy army troops: 49 sk - 80, 44, 135 sd, 36 and 49 brigade, 137, 330 and 331 ap and 34

artillery division of the RGK in the area - Bagovitsa, Studenitsa,

Star. Ushitsa, Krushanovka for the attack on the station. Larga.

36th Rifle Corps - 169th and 130th Rifle Divisions, leaving a reinforced joint venture on the front of Kalyus, Mogilev-Podolsk to demonstrate the crossing and pinning down the enemy, deploy the main forces on the front of Yampol, Soroka in readiness to force the river. Dniester. Kamenetz-Podolsky and Mogilev-Podolsky

URs in their areas. Army aviation: 86 and 60 sbp, 87, 88, and 92 iap; 47 rae, rae 60 sbp.

Include in the army: 5, 13, 22, 25 Pon. battalions. Border on the left - r. Savranka,

st. Popelyukhi, Kamenka, Kopachany, Pyrlitsa (30 km north-east of Iasi),

all claims. for 5A. *Fifth.* 9 A. Army Commander - Lieutenant General Comrade Boldin, Deputy. Commander - Lieutenant General Comrade Kozlov.

Army Headquarters - Grosulovo.

Deploy army troops: 140th rifle

division at the front of V. Molokish, Rybnitsa, Gederim to demonstrate the crossing over the river. Dniester. 35 sc (173 and 95 sd, 522 ap RGK); 37 sc (176, 147, 30 sd; 14, 21 brigade; 110, 124, 430, 320 ap, 317 artillery div of the RGK); 7 sc (164, 51 sd; 429 gap RGK); 4 brigade; 150th Rifle Division - in the area of Dubossary, Tiraspol, Ploskoe, Shibka for delivering the main blow to Khushi south of Chisinau.

KMG - 5 kk (9 and 32 cd), 15 msd, 4, 14, 21 brigade to use for the development of a breakthrough in the direction of Khushi. 55 sk -

Odessa, 25 and 74 sd - in the area of \u200b\u200bOvidiopol, Dalnik (Southern), Baraboy; 116th Rifle Division - Odessa, continuing to guard the Black Sea coast from Odessa to Ochakovo with one Rifle Division, the main forces to be ready for action with the support of the Black Sea Fleet to capture the Bugaz lighthouse and Akkerman.

Rybnitsa and Tiraspol URs in their areas. Sev. Zap. Since June 23,

the UR has been subordinated to the Commander 9A. Dneprovskaya is transferred to the NW UR military flotilla.

Army aviation: 5, 132, 45 sbp, ... sbp, ... sbp, 11 lbp, 21 dbp, 55, 4, 67, 146 iap. Include in the army 26,

27 and 4 Pontus. battalions. *Sixth.* Front reserve: 8th, 17th and 86th

rifle divisions are concentrated

in the area of Chertkov, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Dunaevtsy; 100 sd - in the area of \u200b\u200bVasilyevka, Frunzovka, Calm. 8, 11, 51, 90 dbp, 33 and 48 sbp, 2 and 43 IAP Kyiv (air defense). 20 IAP - Proskurov, 89 IAP Lvov, 1 and 14 Tap, 34 Drae. *Seventh.* The time to reach the deployment line will be given additionally. *Eighth.* The

headquarters of the Southern Front from 6.00 23.6 - Proskurov "847 .

The third document delivered to the General Staff was a draft directive to the troops of the Southern Front No. A-1 / 00145ss / s: *"First.* The Romanian

army, having a small grouping in the direction of Balti, concentrated its main forces on the wings of the front. In the Chernivtsi direction, up to seven infantry divisions, one GSB and one cd are grouped; in the Chisinau region and to the south, up to six pd and two cd. Up to four or five infantry divisions and up to two mechanized brigades are concentrated in the area of Botoshan, Iasi, Roman - presumably in the reserve of the front.

Second. The troops of the Southern Front ... hour ... June (hereinafter, instead of the name of the month, its serial number is used - ... 6. - *M.M.*) to cross the state border and, inflicting the main blow from Kolomyia to Chernivtsi, bypassing them from the south and further along the river. Prut and at the same time from the east to Khushi, bypassing Chisinau from the south, encircle and capture the Romanian troops deployed in Northern Bessarabia. After occupying the Yassy region and fulfilling the immediate task, the armies of the front should have in mind an offensive to the south along the river. Prut with the task of clearing South Bessarabia of enemy troops.

Third. 12 And the main forces of at least nine rifle divisions, with tank units, with the support of strong artillery and all aviation of the army and the front, break through the enemy's position on the front of Chernoguz, Russki-Banyliv, Zelena, Hliveshte and, advancing along the river. Prut to Yassy, bypassing Chernivtsi from the south, [toward] the outcome ... 6 main forces to reach the front of Khlivoka, Molodna. In the future, advancing on Dorohoi, the main forces [to] the outcome ... 6 to capture the front of Satu Mari, Vatkan, Derska, Gorzhiuttsy, Pomyrla, Comeneshti. To develop success [since] morning ... 6, introduce KMG into the breakthrough as part of Kav. groups, 81 motor rifle divisions and all tank brigades of the army, tentatively on the Storozhinets, Mihalche front. [By] the end ... 6 tank brigades, after completing the tasks of the first day, concentrate three - in the

Storozhinets region, two - in the Bobeshti region and one - in Drochinets.

With the direct and constant support of the aviation of the army and the front, KMG develop an offensive along the river. 6 go to the front over the area of Trusheshi, Dohyn, Dava and B. By the end ... 6, capture the Iasi region, establish interaction with units of 9 A, surround and prevent the enemy from retreating to Romania. 81 motor rifle divisions with one BT tank brigade advance on Storozhinets and further south, ensuring the offensive

of the army

from the side of the river Seret [Siret] and cutting off the enemy's escape route to the west.

192nd Rifle Division, providing the right wing of the front, advance on Seletin [Selyatin]. Upon reaching Seletin, cover the Ustse-Putilas direction with a strong detachment, and continue the attack on Vikovorkhni with the main forces. To reliably ensure the flank of the army from the Suceava

side, the Commander of 12 A should push through Chudyn

one SD with the task of occupying and defending the Kostitsa, Seret [Siret] line.

The border between 12 and 5 A - p. Zbruch, Khotyn, Lipkany, all for 12 A inclusive. The boundaries

between buildings should be: Between 13

and 8 sk Kobaki, Comareshti Slobozia, Hrinava, Mihuceni, Vakulesti all for 13 sk inclusive. Between 8 and 17 sk Tuchapy, Drachinets, Mihalche, Fundoia, Dorohoi, all except Drachinets incl. for 8 speed Between 17 and 15 sk Stetsova, Valava, Chernivtsi,

Slobodzia, Dumenya, all except Dumenya incl. for 17 speed *Fifth.* 5 A - 49 sk as part of three rifle divisions, 36 and 49 brigade;

330, 137 and 331 ap and 34 artillery divisions. RGK with the assistance of aviation to cross the river. Dniester in the section Tsviklevtsy, Studenica, Star. Ushitsa and, developing an offensive on st. Larga, Balasinesti, surround with joint actions with 12 A the enemy located to the west of Radautsi. [To] the end ... 6 take over the line of Lipkany, Tretyany. 36 sk, leading for ... 6 a demonstration of crossings over the river. Dniester at the front Kalus, Mogilev-Podolsky, from 6 to force

the river. Dniester in the area of Yampol, Soroca and advance in the direction of Balti. morning ... The border on the left - r. Savranka, st.

Popelyukhi, Kamenka, Kopachany, Pyrlitsa (30 km N.V. Iasi) all for 5 A

exclusively.

The border between sk 49 and 36 is Kalus, Sekuryany, Ryshkanovka [Ryshkany], all except Kalus incl. for 49 speed *Sixth.* 9 A, demonstrating the crossing over the river. Dniester 140 rifle division in the Rybnitsa region, with the main forces consisting of 35, 37, 7 sk, 5 kk, 4, 14, 21 brigade, with the assistance of strong artillery and all army aviation, force the river. Dniester at the front of Cellars, Tiraspol and, delivering the main blow south of Chisinau to Khushi, together with KMG 12A, encircle and destroy the enemy in Northern Bessarabia. 6 KMG consisting of 5 kk, 4, 14 and 21 brigade, 15 motor rifle division to go to the

the barriers to area of Bardar, Gancheshty, Mileshty, [k] [k] outcome ... 6 force the river. Rod and master Khushi. In the future, pushing Chisinau. the south and west, keep in mind the outcome ... to advance on Iasi from the south. Rifle units [to] the outcome ... 6 to occupy In the future, consolidating the success of 6 on the river. Rod and firmly occupy Khushi. KMG, with a decisive offensive, withdraw the main offensive, move part of the forces to the north and north-west to compress the encirclement of grouping no later ... When developing the the northern Bessarabian grouping of the enemy and capture the ways of his retreat beyond the river. Rod. To protect against possible enemy attacks from southern Bessarabia, allocate at least two rifle divisions in a barrier to the southwest and south.

55th Rifle Corps, guarding the Black Sea coast from Odessa to Ochakovo inclusive with one SD, with the rest of the forces, with the assistance of the Black Sea Fleet, capture the Bugaz lighthouse, occupy Akkerman and continue the offensive on Sarat. The boundaries between

the buildings have:

Between 35 and 37 sk Delakeu, Merena, Ploveshty, Lopusna, the first two claims. for 35 speed

Between 37 and 7 sk Tokmodzeya, Novo-Nikolaevka, Jaman, Rezena, Karakui, Minghir, all except the first inclusive for 37 speed.

Between 7 and 55 sk Tiraspol, Manzyr (Countess), Tarutino (Anchokrak) all except Manzyr incl. for 7 speed *Seventh*.

The tasks of the Air

Force: 1) Interaction with ground troops on the battlefield when breaking through the enemy's fortified zone and developing success, directly and constantly supporting the actions of our troops by destroying enemy troops. 2) The struggle for air supremacy

by destroying the enemy air force in the air and at its airfields. 3) Covering the main grouping 12 and 9 A and especially the KMG when it moves out of the waiting area and

when entering it into a

breakthrough. 4) Continuous and close interaction with KMG 12

and 9 A. 5) Covering the crossings on the river.

Cheremosh and Dniester. 6) Violation of command and control of enemy troops, the destruction of his headquarters and the destruction of communication lines. 7) Prevent the advance of enemy reserves from the areas:

Klausenburg, Yassy, Roman, Byrlad. *Eighth*. Commander of the Air Force of the front to prepare the parachute landing in the

composition of three

brigades in the areas: 1) Podu-Iloaei, 2) Tirgu-Frumos (25 and

40 km north-west of Iasi) readiness ... 6. Ninth . From ... 6 border troops are transferred to my operational subordination.

Border troops to remain in their places, performing the same task. To perform special tasks to capture crossings across the river. Cheremosh and Dniester, to the chief of the border troops, select selected teams from the border guards and seize the them and order the army commanders ... bridges with a sudden attack on 6, prevent the enemy from blowing them up, hold to clear mines.

Tenth. In order to ensure greater independence of tank formations during their operations as part of the KMG, by order of the Army Commanders, for each tank brigade, allocate an airborne detachment consisting of shooters and sappers, at the rate of 7 people for each BT tank and 4 for T-26. Airborne tank detachments are to be subordinated to the commanders of tank brigades, placed on tanks and together with tank brigades send into the breach.

Eleventh. In connection with the need for closer interaction between the ground forces and the Black Sea Navy, from 10.00 23.6 I subordinate the Black Sea naval forces to the Military Council of the 9th A. in operational terms. I assign the following tasks to the Black Sea

Navy: when forcing the river. Dniester through the spit

Dniester estuary and with further advance along the Black Sea coast;

b) to prevent the appearance and actions of enemy ships along the sections of the coast occupied by 9 A troops; c) establish surveillance

over the ports of Romania, block the Black Sea coast from the Dniester

liman up to the Sulinsky branch of the Danube inclusive;

d) to protect the Black Sea coast (the area of the Odessa naval base and the Ochakovsky sector of coastal defense) from the actions of enemy ships"848 . At 21.00 on June 23, the

People's Commissar of Defense and the Chief of the General Staff sent a cipher telegram No. OU / 71 to Zhukov, in which they said that "I basically approve the plan presented by you.

In the grouping of the 12th army and in the direction of the offensive, make the following

changes: 1. Deploy a strike group consisting of the 8th, 17th and 15th divisions of the corps with the bulk of the artillery at the front Zaluchye, Snyatyn, Gorodnitsa and develop an offensive on the Chernivtsi (incl.), Rzhavintsy front.

2. 13th corps to advance on the front of Voloka, Chernivtsi (excl.), having 192 rifle divisions in the second echelon

"849 . At 11:30 p.m. on June 23, Zhukov called Shaposhnikov and, apparently, tried to agree on some clarifications of the instructions received. The Chief of the General Staff answered him that the instructions of the People's Commissar of Defense set out in telegram No. OU/71 remained "in force. There will be no objections to expanding the breakthrough front to the right to 3-4 km. There are no objections to the proposal to establish an offensive front for the main grouping of Voloka (excl.). Offensive 12 And conduct along both banks of the river. Rod. The cavalry-mechanized group, according to the people's commissar, is very likely to be introduced after the troops reach the Prut region. It is not known how the situation near Chernivtsi will develop and from which side it will have to be taken .

Based on these instructions, the command of the Southern Front at 11.15 on June 24 issued order No. 2 / M to its troops: "The People's

Commissar of Defense approved the action plans of the 5th Army, 9th Army and the Black Sea Fleet without changes. Introduce

the following changes to the actions of the 12th Army: 1. Deliver

the main blow of the 12th Army with the forces of 8th Rifle Corps, 17th Rifle Corps and 15th Rifle Corps on the front Russki Banylyv, Snyatyn, Serafints in the general direction of Chernivtsi, along the Prut River.

2. The boundary of buildings is established between sk 13 and sk 8 - Russki Banylyv, Voloka, Dorokhoy, all inclusive for sk 13, except Dorokhoy. Between 8 sk and 17 sk - the Prut river to Chernivtsi, then Vatra, between 17 sk

and 15 sk - Stetsova, Rakitna, Toporouci, Dynzheni, all for 17 sk, except Raki[t]na.

3. 15 sc [in] the starting position 23.6 on the Stetsov front (excl.), Serafins and advances [in] the direction Kolenkoucy, Stalinesti [Stalnovtsy], forcing the Prut River in the section Mamaliga, Radeutsi.

4. 192nd Rifle Division withdraws [to] the Pistyn area for operations in the second echelon behind the right flank of 13th Rifle Division. 5. 139 SD to ensure the right flank of the 12 Army is advanced from the second day to the Seret River [Siret] for sites Kamenka, Seret [Siret].

6. 168 gap BM and 24 tank brigade are withdrawn from the composition of the 13 sk and 168 gap - 17 sk, 24 tank brigade - 8 sk are attached. 7.

From the composition of the 8th brigade, the 5th tank brigade of the 17th brigade is transferred.

The rest is unchanged. The commander of the 12th army, in accordance with these clarifications, to regroup, completing it by the morning of 26.6 "851. Thus, the troops of the Southern Front received current directives for the upcoming operation.

Accordingly, the commander of the Air Force of the Southern Front, Lieutenant General F.A. Astakhov prepared combat order No. 01 / ss, which set the tasks of aviation to support their troops and gain air supremacy. At dawn on the first day of the offensive, aviation was to launch a surprise attack on enemy airfields. It was assumed that the Soviet Air Force would organize a continuous round-the-clock impact on enemy troops. Heavy bomber regiments were preparing for attacks on enemy airfields in the depths of his defenses - Iasi, Vaslui, Bacau, Roman, Tekuch and Focsani. Aviation was entrusted with covering their headquarters and scattering leaflets. On June 25-26, the Air Force command developed a plan for landing in the Tirgu-Frumos area, which was supposed to help complete the encirclement and disorganize the enemy's rear. It was supposed to land 2,040 people from the 201st, 204th and 214th airborne brigades in 2 hours and 35 minutes, who were supposed to interact with the Cavalry Mechanized Group (KMG). Landing from 120 TB-3 aircraft under the cover of 300 fighters was to be preceded by an air strike on airfields and enemy troops in the landing area. Meanwhile, at 10.45 on June 24, the commander of the 9th Army reported to the headquarters of the Southern Front the plan of "exercises" 55-

th Rifle Corps:

"1. The 25th Rifle Division is being transported through the Bugaz lighthouse by the main forces with a preliminary landing of a sea landing on the cape of the right bank of the [Tsaregrad] gill.

2. 74th Rifle Division transports only two reduced battalions across the Dniester to capture the estuary in order to capture the right bank of the estuary north of Akkerman. The battalions are transported on fishing boats, on some of them it is possible to install anti-tank guns and anti-tank guns for firing on the move. Consequently, each battalion is planned to be reinforced with 4 anti-tank guns and two regimental ones. The remaining forces of the 74th Rifle Division, as well as the main forces of the 25th Rifle Division, are crossing the pontoon bridge across the [Tsaregrad] arm, for which two pontoon battalions are concentrated.

3. The entire operation to capture the right bank of the river and the crossing over the pontoon bridge is provided by artillery, aviation and artillery of the ships of the Black Sea Fleet"854. To the north of the Dniester estuary in the lower reaches of the Dniester on the front of Yassky, Mayaki, the combined rifle and machine gun regiment of the Tiraspol UR and the combined artillery regiment of the Odessa Artillery School, which were supposed to force the river and advance on Korkmazy and Khan-Kishlo, diverting the enemy from Ackerman, should be concentrated.

At 7 pm on June 25, the head of the border troops of the Western District of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR, Major General I.A. Petrov gave the order: "1. The military and the bourgeois-capitalist clique of Romania, preparing provocative actions against the USSR, concentrated large military forces on the border with the USSR, increased the number of border pickets to 100 people, increased the number of detachments sent to guard the border, and at an accelerated pace is building defensive structures along its border and in the near future. rear. 2. The commander of the Southern Front set the task before the border units of the Western District: a) to clear mines, capture and hold bridges on the border rivers; b) stubbornly defend the state border on the front of the 12th Army where units of the Red Army will not operate; c) provide parts of the Red Army with conductors; d) clear the rear of the 12th army from possible enemy pockets in the border zone of Romania ... "856

Concentration and grouping of the troops of the Southern Front

While the detailed development of the plan of operation continued, concrete Soviet military preparations began to resolve the Bessarabian issue. Apparently, having received the corresponding instructions from the political leadership at 20.50–21.55 on June 9, 857 Shaposhnikov sent cipher telegrams similar in content to the commanders of the KOVO and OdVO troops at 0.35–1.00 on June 10. "The People's Commissar of Defense ordered: 1. Not to

organize tank corps and divisions and the instructions given to you on this issue, cancel.

2. Immediately put on alert and prepare for transfer by railroad and marching ": in KOVO - the department of the 12th Army, the department of the Army Cavalry Group, the departments of the 17th, 13th, 8th, 15th and 49th th rifle corps with corps units, 2nd and 4th cavalry corps, 58th, 139th, 72nd, 192nd,

81st, 7th, 141st, 131st, 62nd, 60th, 124th, 146th, 80th, 169th, 130th, 135th, 44th th and 140th rifle divisions, 5th, 3rd, 34th, 16th, 32nd, 9th, 14th cavalry divisions, 23rd, 24th, 5th, 38th, 36th, 10th, 14th, 26th tank brigades; in OdVO - directorates of the 35th and 7th rifle corps with corps units, 15th, 51st, 95th, 173rd, 176th, 147th,

30th and 25th rifle divisions , 4th tank brigade. "All artillery regiments of the RGK and all pontoon facilities. 3. Put all aviation of the district and air defense systems on alert. 4. All rifle and cavalry divisions, tank brigades, corps directorates, air bases and air defense systems are put on alert in the existing

states without lifting the assigned staff and transport from the national economy.

5. One day is given to prepare for the performance. The beginning of the transfer and movement from 00.05 minutes 11 June.

6. The disbandment of the rear units to be reduced and the dismissal of the reserve to be suspended. 7. Additional instructions will be given on the points of concentration, the order of movement and the transfer. 8. All work to bring parts of the district on combat readiness to be carried out in strict secrecy, involving in headquarters a limited circle of people, all correspondence should be conducted only in cipher and only through me .

At 11.20–11.30 on June 10, the chief of the General Staff of the Red Army sent the commanders of the OdVO and KOVO top secret directives No. ýý/583 and ý ýý/584, respectively, according to which it was required:

"1. In marching order, concentrate the following units in new areas ": In the OdVO:" a) the Office of the Army Headquarters, allocated by the district - Grosulovo by the morning of June 15; b) Ex. 35 sk with hull units - Chern by the morning of June 12; 95 sd - Rybnitsa, Voronkovo by the morning of June 12; 176th rifle division - Dubossary, New Koshnitsa by the morning of June 13; 110 gap RGK - Voronkovo by the morning of June 13; 522 gap RGK and 39 artillery divisions b / m - Dubossary, Nov. Aleksandrovka by the morning of June 14; c) 51 sd - Malaesti, Tiraspol by the morning of June 13; 15th motorized rifle division - Karmanovo, Glinnoye, Pavlovka by the morning of June 12; 4 tbr - Shibka by the morning of June 13; 320 Popes of the RGC - Grigoriopol.

In KOVO: "a) Directorate of the 12th Army - Kolomyia by the morning of June 13; b) Ex. 13 sk with hull units - Kossow by the morning of June 15; 192 GSD - Ustseryki by the morning of June 17; 139 GSD - Kutu by the morning of June 12;

c) Ex. 8 sk with hull units - Ilintsa by the morning of June 17; 172 GSD - Dzhurov, Prince by the morning of June 15; d) Ex. 17 sk with hull units - Volchkovtse by the morning of June 12; 58 sd - Snyatyn - by the morning of June 12; e) 7th RD - Dzvinyach - by the morning of June 14; 81 msd - Zablotov by the morning of June 13; e) Ex. 4 kk with hull units - Klyuchuv by the morning of June 14; 34 cd - Klyuchuv by the morning of June 14; 16 cd - Yabloniv by the morning of June 12; g) Ex. 2 kk with hull units - Kolomyia by the morning of June 16; 3 cd - Spas by the morning of June 16; 5 cd - Podgaychiki

by the morning of June 16; 32 cd - Gvozdets - by the morning of June 15;

h) 23 brigade - Pyastyn by the morning of June 12; 24 brigade - Klyuchuv by the morning of June 13; 5 brigade - Zadrubovtse by the morning of June 13; i) 168 Gap RGK - Ilintse by the morning of June 13; 324 gap RGK - Beleliya by the morning of June 14; j) Management of the caval group with its units and management of the 49th sk with corps units - Dunaevtsy by the morning of June 12; k) 80 sd - Yanchitsy, Bagovitsa by the morning of June 14; 169 sd - Kurazhino, Olkhovets by the morning of June 16; 137 gap RGK - Mogilev-Podolsky region by the morning of June 14; m)

14 cd - by the end of June 16. 2.

Marches with camouflage measures, using mainly the night. 3. Material provision of projecting parts according to my directive. 4. Issue topographic maps according to the norms of mobile sets to units in new areas. For the period of the march provide parts with current allowance cards.

5. Take all measures to keep the movement of troops secret, for which: a) prohibit all correspondence related to the movement of troops with the heads of the military branches and services, its only through headquarters and in cipher; b) all military radio stations that have changed their location, work only for reception; c) demand the strictest camouflage measures from the troops and prohibit the advance of the main forces of divisions closer than 5 km to the border. 6. March to start on

June 10. 7. Reports on the movement of units and the areas they have reached by 10 and 22 hours daily in cipher. Pay special attention to communication with the units and the obligatory receipt from them of data on the areas reached . On the same day at 12.20 Shaposhnikov sent directive No. OU/587/ss/ov to the commander of the OdVO troops, according to which it was required:

"1. Parts arriving by rail, after unloading, concentrate in the following areas: a) Ex. 7 sk with body parts - Shibka; 147 RD - Grigoriopol, Tashlyk, Savva; 120 gap RGK - Kassel; 124 gap RGK - Malaesti, Ploskoye; 429 Gap RGK - Near Khutor, Tiraspol;

b) 30 rifle division - 5 km east and southeast of Ovidiopol; 25 sd - Odessa; 430 gap RGK - Odessa.

2. Concentration should be carried out by echelon as units are unloaded, avoiding the accumulation of troops both at unloading stations and in their areas.

3. To issue topographic maps to all units at the unloading stations according to the norms of mobile sets. 4. The plan for the transportation of the units listed in the first paragraph will be given by the Head of the Red Army. 5. Instructions on the concentration of parts of aviation, communications, engineering, road and motor transport and logistics institutions will follow additionally. 6. Reports on the progress of transportation, indicating the arriving units, submit to me by 10 and 22 o'clock daily in cipher "860". However, already at 18.50 on June 10, Chief of the General Staff Shaposhnikov sent directive No. OU / 589 / especially secret to the commander of the OdVO troops, clarifying the previous orders:

"In addition to No. OU / 583 and No. OU / 587, the People's Commissar of Defense ordered: 1.

Ex. 35 sk with hull units to concentrate Shibka by the morning of June 13; 173 sd - Dubossary; 176th Rifle Division - the campaign of Grigoriopol by the morning of June 13;

2. Exerc. 7 sk with hull parts to concentrate Odessa. 3. 110 gap RGK

by the Karmanovka campaign by the morning of June 13. 4.

147 rifle divisions, 120 and 124 gaps of the RGK will leave the district. 429 GAP RGK will not arrive in the district"861. In addition, it was decided to strengthen the troops of the Southern Front at the expense of the internal districts and troops concentrated for the Baltic operation. On June 10, the Directive of the General Staff No. OM / 706 was sent to the Military Council of the KhVO, according to which it was necessary to prepare the department of the 55th rifle corps for redeployment to the OdVO. On June 12, the General Staff ordered the 74th and 164th Rifle Divisions of the North Caucasus Military District to be transferred to the OdVO. On June 14, the Military Council of the KhVO received the directive of the General Staff No. OU/25, which demanded that the 116th Rifle Division be transferred to the OdVO862. On June 15, the Black Sea Fleet was put on alert. At 23:00 on June 17, the chief of the General Staff ordered the commander of the LVO troops to "prepare the 8th, 17th, 86th and 100th rifle divisions for transfer to another district," concentrated on the territory of the district as a reserve in case of fighting in the Baltic. All these formations were to be prepared for loading by 6 p.m. on June 18863. Accordingly, the commander of the KOVO troops was ordered:

"1. Concentrate four rifle divisions transferred from the LVO in the reserve of the front: a) 8th, 17th and 86th line divisions in the area of Chortkiv, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Dunaevtsy; b) 100 line division - in the area of

Vasilyevka, Frunzovka, Calm. 2. In connection with the strengthening of the

KOVO troops with four new divisions, the transfer of the 97th rifle division to the 12th army should be canceled"864. The 21st tank brigade, which

took part in the Baltic operation, was withdrawn from Lithuania, concentrated in Molodechno by the morning of June 20 and sent by rail to OdVO, where the first echelons of the brigade began to arrive on June 26865. On June 20, the 214th Airborne Brigade of the BOVO was withdrawn from Riga, transferred by June 26 to Kalinovka at the disposal of the Southern Front. On June 20, the 201st Airborne Brigade of the LVO, which was not used in Estonia, received an order from the General Staff to relocate to the Southern Front and was transferred from Soltsy to Skomorohi by June 25866. On June 26, by its directive No. OM / 755, the General Staff ordered the Military Council of the KalVO to transfer communications units from Idritsa to Kiev at the disposal of KOVO867. In addition, on the same day, the commander of the 14th Rifle Corps of the OdVO was ordered to organize the defense of the Black Sea coast from Ochakov to Cape Zhelezny. By the morning of June 28, units of the 156th Infantry Division were deployed on the western coast of Crimea from Ak-Mechet to Nikolaevka, as well as in Feodosia and Kerch.

Along with the concentration of ground forces, the Air Force of the Southern Front was also strengthened. On June 17, the chief of the General Staff ordered the commander of the BOVO to return to KOVO the 17th, 20th, 149th fighter and 14th heavy bomber regiments, which had been transferred to the BOVO by June 11 to participate in the Baltic operation, and, in addition, to redeploy the 33rd th fighter, 13th, 16th, 60th high-speed bomber and 1st heavy bomber regiments and controls of the 16th and 56th air brigades. It was necessary "to pay special attention to the special secrecy of the transfer"869. By June 19, all these regiments, which included 408 aircraft, arrived at KOVO870. On the same day, the commander of the BOVO was ordered to transfer the 51st long-range bomber regiment to the KOVO, and the commander of the LVO was ordered to transfer the 44th, 58th high-speed bomber regiments and the command of the 55th air brigade to the OdVO. On June 21, the LVO received an order to transfer the 3rd and 7th heavy bomber regiments and the command of the 29th air brigade to the OdVO872. All these air regiments, consisting of 206 aircraft, arrived at the disposal of the Air Force of the Southern Front on June 22873.

In the meantime, having received directives from Moscow, the command of the KOVO and OdVO within 15 minutes notified the troops about putting them on alert, and at 15.04–21.45 on June 10 gave orders to concentrate. Lieutenant-General F.S. Ivanov, head of the Combat Training Department, Major General V.V. Panyukhov, Chief of Artillery KOVO Lieutenant General N.D. Yakovlev, head of the group for special assignments at the Military Council of the KOVO, Major General D.I. Averkin. The commanders and political workers of the headquarters of the districts were sent to direct the unloading of troops at the stations of Zhmerinka, Proskurov, Grechany, Kamenetz-Podolsk, Kolomyia874.

On June 11, the troops of the KOVO and OdVO, under the guise of a training campaign, began to concentrate, which was supposed to

end June 24th. However, this process encountered a number of difficulties. A serious problem for the troops was bringing them to combat readiness without calling up assigned staff, which required the redistribution of military personnel to form the necessary rear and auxiliary units. To do this, nearly 35,000 Red Army soldiers were recruited from the combat units, poorly prepared to fulfill the new duties assigned to them. The lack of commanding staff of the rear specialties and medical personnel was made up for by their conscription from the reserve. On the basis of the resolutions of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks and the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR of June 19, 20 and 21, 16 field hospitals, 6 departments of field evacuation points, 4 infectious diseases hospitals, 2 auto-sanitaries, 5 auto-surgical detachments, 12 ambulance trains, hospitals in Lvov, Tarnopol, Proskurov, Odessa and Ochakovo were prepared to receive the wounded. Anti-tetanus and anti-gangrenous sera were released from the mobilization funds of the KOVO and OdVO. To support the combat operations of the troops, 34 various warehouses, 5 bakeries, 7 field mobile hospitals, 3 evacuation and 8 field veterinary infirmaries, 9 working companies were deployed. The lack of transport led to the fact that the troops that set out on the campaign were not able to immediately take the necessary weapons and equipment, which led to a delay in concentration, because it required several trips of the available vehicles. To replenish in case of loss, there were 17 marching battalions assigned by the General Staff, 10 marching battalions formed in the KOVO and OdVO, 5 spare sapper companies and 225 tank crews⁸⁷⁵.

On June 13, the People's Commissariat of Defense was allowed to "enroll the commanding staff of those military units" of the KOVO and OdVO, "which have front-line assignments, with a deduction for the issued food ration of its cost, as performing work in the field"⁸⁷⁶. At 4 pm on the same day, Shaposhnikov sent a cipher telegram No. OU / 789 to the chiefs of staff of the KOVO and OdVO outlining measures to organize the rear and material support of the troops. In particular, it was required to provide the troops with 4 daily dachas of food, 1.25 ammunition ammunition, 3 refueling for combat vehicles and 2 refueling for transport vehicles. "The military personnel should be given concentrates for one day and have them in the wagon train for two daily dachas. Give mechanized units and cavalry three daily rations of concentrates. In addition, supply stations should have 2 sets of ammunition, from 3 to 5 daily food dachas and 2 refueling for all vehicles⁸⁷⁷. On June 19, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks allowed 13,650 tons of flour, 4,100 tons of cereals, 3,400 tons of meat and canned meat, 1,500 tons of fish and canned fish, 1,000 tons of fat, 1,700 tons of pasta, 700 tons of sugar, 850 tons of salt, 30 tons of tea, 135 tons of dried vegetables, 13,000 boxes of shag, 4,550,000 smoking paper books, 1,950,000 boxes of matches, 150 tons of soap, 22,500 tons oats, 30 thousand tons of hay and 54,327 tons of fuels and lubricants (including 50,731 tons of gasoline)⁸⁷⁸. Accordingly, at 23.40 on June 20, the Chief of the General Staff, by his directives No. 434 and No. 446, demanded that the Military Councils of the KOVO and the OdVO take decisive measures to accumulate the above stocks in the troops and at supply stations⁸⁷⁹.

Almost 60% of the troops were transferred by rail, the rest - on foot. During the concentration, the poor organization of the traffic control service was revealed, which led to the crossing of columns, traffic jams and the wandering of individual units and units. The weak discipline of the march had an effect - the columns were stretched, the military personnel left the ranks and moved in a crowd, the units were located in the bivouacs in disarray. In the first days, a significant number of abrasions were revealed in people and horse composition. The troops moved practically without observing elementary camouflage measures, with music and songs; at night, vehicles clearly unmasked the movement with undarkened headlights. Certain difficulties also arose in the rail transportation of troops, since there was no transportation plan. The order of the General Staff on transportation was received only at 18.30 on June 12, although the transportation was supposed to begin at 18.00 that day. In reality, they began on June 13, however, the echelons were delivered 1-5 hours late, the cars were often dirty. The disorder in the organization of transportation was so noticeable that on June 16 the Politburo approved the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR "On streamlining the work of unloading areas," which required NPOs and the People's Commissariat of Transportation "not to allow the unloading to be concentrated only at the terminal stations, but to disperse it over a wider front along a number of nearby stations" on the territory of the KOVO and OdVO, as well as to form full military echelons and prevent their redirection. The uncoordinated work of the Department of Military Communications and the NKPS led to the fact that instead of the required 709 echelons, the troops received about a third less.

All these difficulties led to the fact that the troops did not have time to concentrate by June 24th. Therefore, on June 23, the commander of the Southern Front reported to the Commissar of Defense: "Fulfilling your directive, the troops of the KOVO and OdVO began to

concentrate from

10.6.1940.

By now: 12th Army: a)

Rifle troops: Of the twelve rifle divisions, six have concentrated, the rest are concentrating. At the same time, towards the 24.6 only two will be concentrated. The rest during: 25.6 - one, 26.6 - two, 27.6 - one. b)

Cavalry: The cavalry group is fully concentrated. c) *Tank*

troops: Of the six tank brigades, four were concentrated. Two will finish concentration by the end of 24.6.

d) *Artillery*: Of the seven artillery regiments and two divisions of the RGC, four artillery regiments were concentrated. The remaining artillery regiments are only being loaded. The speed of their concentration will depend on the timely supply of rolling stock and on the provision of tractors.

Artillery battalions have unloaded completely and will concentrate by 24.6. Until now, KAPs 17 sk (269 and 274), 13 sk (468), 8 sk (236), 253 gap 141 sd have not been concentrated due to the failure to supply trains and due to a lack of tractors.

Thus, by the end of June 24, the 12th Army will have in its composition: Eight rifle divisions out of 12.

Four RGK artillery regiments out of 7. Two RGK artillery battalions. Kavgroup in full force.

Full readiness of the 12th army - by the end of 27.6.40.

5th army:

a) *Rifle troops*: Of the five rifle divisions, four have concentrated, the last must complete the concentration by 24.6. b) *Tank troops*: Of the two tank brigades, one has concentrated, the second will complete the concentration on 23.6. c) *Artillery*: Of the three artillery regiments and one artillery division of the RGK, one artillery regiment was concentrated. One artillery regiment and artillery division focus on 25.6. The third artillery regiment is awaiting loading.

Thus, by the end of June 24, all rifle divisions, tank brigades, one artillery regiment will be fully concentrated. By the end of June 24, separate divisions and batteries can concentrate from the second artillery regiment and the artillery division. Full readiness of the 5th army -

outcome 26.6.40 9th army: a) *Rifle troops*: The

departments of 37th and 55th brigades did not arrive. Of the thirteen rifle divisions, eight were concentrated; finished shipping three; started transportation alone (150[-i]); there is no information about 116[th].

b) *Cavalry*: Management 5 kk concentrated. On June 21, 15 echelons of 9 cd and 19 - 32 cd were unloaded. 5 kk will finish concentration 24.6. c) *Tank troops*:

Of the three tank brigades, 4 [th] tank brigade concentrated, 14 [-th] tank brigade began to arrive on 21.6, 6 echelons unloaded. There is no information about the 21 brigade.

d) *Artillery*: Of the six artillery regiments of the RGK, four were concentrated. 429 ap began to arrive on 21.6. 317 the artillery battalion, due to the lack of tractors, cannot move to the area of concentration.

We must assume that by the end of 24.6 out of thirteen rifle divisions - eleven will be in place. The cavalry will concentrate. Two tank brigades will be in place, 21 brigade may not come up. Of the six artillery regiments, four will be at full strength, two may not be fully concentrated.

The concentration of 317 artillery divisions depends on the provision of tractors. Measures taken.

Full readiness of the 9th army will be no earlier than 27.6. *Troop condition*.

The provision of small arms and artillery weapons is incomplete: 1. Part of the artillery regiments do not have 152-mm howitzers in full (375 out of 48 RGK gaps have 30, gaps: 62 sd has 9, 146 sd - 10, 135 sd - 5; 169 sd - 6).

2. There are no mines for 50 and 120-mm mortars in the Okrug's mob reserve, no hand grenades; no shots for 122mm guns.

There is a shortage in the tractor park for artillery on the mechtzag. Of the 250 tractors released by the center, only 110 arrived. Due to the additional lifting of 330 gaps of the RGK BM, even if the full 250 tractors for artillery were received, 106 tractors would not be enough. The delay in the arrival of tractors already released puts artillery in a difficult situation. The shortage of tractors falls on corps artillery and RGK artillery, the need for which will be especially noticeable in the first 2-3 days.

Of the six tank brigades of the 12th Army, four are equipped with combat vehicles by 80% (23, 24, 5, 10), the remaining two are poorly equipped: 26 brigade came out with 38 tanks, at present the number of tanks has been increased to 130, 38 brigade has 87 tanks. Of the two tank brigades of the 5th army,

36 brigade has 100, 49 brigade - 81 tanks. The technical condition of the machines is satisfactory. Only 39% are provided with tanks and a barrel brigade. Therefore, tank brigades can raise from only one to two fillings of fuel. There is no possibility of obtaining barrels. Tank units are provided with mobile and repair equipment by 35-50%. The percentage of provision with tractors is low - an average of 58%. There are no tractors in the armies ...

Front Air

Force. On June 22, 1940, the Air Force of the front concentrated: 21 fighter regiments, 12 SB regiments, 5 air regiments of air defense forces, 2 assault air regiments, 2 light bomber regiments, 4 heavy air regiments. Fighters - 1,155, bombers - 869, light bombers - 110, attack aircraft - 93, reconnaissance aircraft - 61. Total crews 2,298, aircraft 2,242 (as in the text, correctly - 2,288. - M.M.) . 12 air bases are deployed at operational airfields, 11 air bases are not deployed. By the end of June 24, 1940, 18 air bases will be deployed. 7 air bases following the rail. dor. from other districts will arrive on June 25–26, 1940." The general conclusion of General Zhukov was that "the full readiness of the Southern Front for the offensive will be ensured by the end of 26 - the morning of 27.6. The delay in the concentration of troops, the organization of the rear and the general readiness for a decisive offensive is a consequence of the failure of the railways to fulfill the transportation plan. The troops of the front can go on to a decisive offensive in order to defeat the Romanian army before dawn on July 27, 1940. 881 At 00.55 on June 25, a report was received from Grosulov to Moscow by the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense, Colonel General A.D. Loktionov, who "acquainted himself in detail with the section of the main direction of the offensive of the 9th Army" and "came to the conclusion that the army would be ready for the offensive only by the outcome of June 26"882 . On June 25, at 13.40,

the Chief of the General Staff ordered the command of the Southern Front, the Degtyarev submachine guns deployed on planes at his disposal, "to issue to the troops as soon as possible at the rate of at least two submachine guns for each rifle platoon and one submachine gun per squad in reconnaissance units ", and also to provide "all forward units with mine-catchers, so that the troops would be armed with these means in advance"883. A little later, at 15.05 of the same day, an order was received from Moscow from the People's Commissar of Defense "to bring ammunition into the troops and supply stations in the most energetic way and create the necessary supplies, both in the troops and at supply stations. For the import of ammunition, mobilize all vehicles, including military vehicles, in order to maximize the importation"884. The non-deployment of the rear and the irregularity of the approach of echelons with ammunition led to the fact that the shells were stored without any disguise near the railway track, from where they were gradually taken out by the available vehicles. As a result, by June 28, it was possible to bring the mobile stocks of troops to 1.5 ammunition, 2 fuel refills and 8 daily food rations. True, due to the lack of the necessary vehicles and the large shortage of tractors and trailers in the artillery units, the troops could actually take 1/3 less ammunition with them, the rest were piled on the ground in the deployment areas. At the supply stations in the 12th Army, 0.6 ammunition, 0.6 refueling and 9 daily allowances were accumulated, in the 5th Army - 1.75 ammunition, 2 refueling and 16 daily allowances, and in the 9th Army - 1.5 ammunition load, 1 refueling and 3 day delivery 885 .

Despite all these difficulties, by the evening of June 27, almost all the troops of the Southern Front (commander - General of the Army G.K. Zhukov, member of the Military Council - Corps Commissar V.N. Borisov, chief of staff - Lieutenant General N.F. Vatutin) were pulled up and deployed as planned. The troops of the 12th Army (commander at the time of the operation - Lieutenant General Ya.T. Cherevichenko), who were in the Carpathians, were deployed to the southeast. The army headquarters was relocated from Stanislav to Kolomyia, where the 8th, 13th, 15th, 17th rifle corps and the Army cavalry group as part of the 2nd and 4th cavalry corps were subordinate to it. Part of the troops of the 5th army, deployed in Volhynia, was reassigned to the 6th and 12th armies. The headquarters of the 5th Army (commander for the duration of the operation - Lieutenant General V.F. Gerasimenko) was transferred from Lutsk to Dunaevtsy on June 15-16, where the 36th and 49th rifle corps were subordinate to it. From the troops of the OdVO, replenished at the expense of the KOVO, KhVO and North Caucasian Military District, the 9th Army (commander - Lieutenant General I.V. Boldin) was deployed as part of the 7th, 35th, 37th, 55th rifle and 5th Cavalry Corps, whose headquarters is located in Grosulovo (now Velikaya Mikhailovka).

Table 5

Grouping of troops of the Southern Front on June 28, 1940 RGVA. F. 37977. Op. 1. D. 667. L. 77; d. 720. L. 61.

Армии	Корпуса		Дивизии и бригады
			8-я, 17-я, 86-я, 100-я СД, 201-я, 204-я, 214-я адбр
12-я		13-й СК	60-я, 62-я, 139-я СД, 23-я тбр
		8-й СК	72-я, 124-я, 146-я СД, 10-я, 24-я, 26-я тбр
	КМГ	2-й КК	3-я, 5-я КД
		4-й КК	16-я, 34-я КД
			81-я МСД
		17-й СК	58-я, 131-я СД, 5-я, 38-я тбр
		15-й СК	7-я, 141-я СД
			192-я ГСД
5-я		49-й СК	44-я, 80-я, 135-я СД, 36-я, 49-я тбр
		36-й СК	130-я, 169-я СД
			140-я, 150-я СД
9-я		35-й СК	95-я, 173-я СД
		37-й СК	30-я, 147-я, 176-я СД, 14-я тбр
		5-й КК	9-я, 32-я КД, 15-я МСД, 4-я, 21-я тбр
		7-й СК	51-я, 164-я СД
		55-й СК	25-я, 74-я, 116-я СД

The troops of the Southern Front included 32 rifle, 2 motorized rifle, 6 cavalry divisions, 11 tank and 3 airborne brigades, 14 corps artillery regiments, 16 RGK artillery regiments and 4 high-capacity artillery divisions. The total number of front troops, according to incomplete data, was at least 637,149 people, 9,415 guns and mortars, 2,461 tanks, 359 armored vehicles, 28,056 vehicles (see table 6) 886 .

Table 6

Number and armament of the troops of the Southern Front					
Войска	Личный состав	Орудия и минометы	Танки	Броне- машины	Авто- машины
12-я армия*	233 673	3 392	1 546	190	11 062
5-я армия*	78 477	1 269	322	59	3 340
9-я армия	267 391	4 238	589	99	12 104
Итого**	637 149	9 415	2 461	359	28 056

*

The information is incomplete.

** The overall result is derived taking into account the available data on front-line troops, as well as rear units and ground services of the Air Force, whose subordination to the 12th and 5th armies could not be established.

The Front Air Force grouping united 21 fighter, 12 high-speed bomber, 5 long-range bomber, 2 light bomber, 2 assault, 4 heavy bomber regiments and by June 24 had 2,160 aircraft⁸⁸⁷. The build-up of the aviation grouping continued (see Table 7). In addition, the 40th high-speed bomber, 8th, 9th, 32nd fighter regiments, 1 heavy bomber squadron of the 2nd long-range bomber regiment, 4 reconnaissance squadrons and 2 air squadrons, in which there were 380 aircraft⁸⁸⁸ .

Table 7

Grouping of the Air Force of the Southern Front on June 29, 1940⁸⁸⁹

Фронт, армии	Авиабригады	Авиаполки	Эскадрильи	Самолеты
Южный фронт	7-я	8-й, 11-й, 51-й, 90-й дбап	—	160
	29-я	1-й, 3-й, 7-й, 14-й тбап	—	122
	22-я	2-й, 43-й иап	—	130
		46-й, 89-й, 20-й иап, 48-й сбап	24-я драз	146
Всего	3	14	1	558
12-я А	16-я	13-й, 16-й сбап	—	83
	35-я	7-й шап, 94-й сбап, 138-й лбап	—	129
	56-я	3-й шап, 33-й, 149-й иап	—	135
	69-я	23-й, 28-й, 91-й иап	—	130
		12-й, 17-й иап	5-я, 8-я драз, 36-я, 44-я раз, 20-й, 12-й као, 3-я аз	152
Всего	4	13	7	629
5-я А	10-я	33-й, 60-й, 86-й сбап	—	168
	38-я	87-й, 88-й, 92-й иап	—	159
			47-я раз, 7-й као	17
Всего	2	6	2	344
9-я А	1-я	4-й, 131-й иап, 132-й сбап	—	187
	13-я	21-й дбап, 44-й, 45-й сбап	—	144
	43-я	5-й сбап, 55-й, 67-й, 69-й иап	—	229
	55-я	11-й лбап, 58-й сбап, 146-й иап	—	149
			42-я, 48-я раз	22
Всего	4	13	2	731
Итого	13	46	8 раз, 3 као, 1 аз	2 262

On June 21, 1940, the head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, army commissar 1st rank L.Z. Mekhlis sent to the Military Councils and the heads of the Political Directorates of the KOVO and the OdVO directive No. 5285/ ss on political work during the Bessarabian campaign, which explained the actions of the USSR as follows: we have Bessarabia. Our brothers live in Bessarabia in horrendous poverty and drag out a miserable existence," which was confirmed by excerpts from the Romanian press.

"The government of the royal dictatorship supplements the economic oppression of the popular masses of Bessarabia with political and national ones. Ethnographically, Bessarabia has nothing to do with Romania. No more than 9.1% of Romanians live there. The rest of the population are Russians, Ukrainians and Moldovans. Russians, Ukrainians and Moldovans, under pain of a court, are forbidden to speak their native language. Their cultural institutions and schools were destroyed.

The Romanian capitalists and landlords subject the Russian and Ukrainian population in Bessarabia. They beat and destroy everyone who sympathizes with the Soviet Union to some extent.

The desire of the Bessarabian population to free themselves from the Romanian oppression is reflected in mass revolutionary uprisings and uprisings, which were brutally suppressed throughout the 22 years of the occupation of Bessarabia. Thus, the Khotyn (1919) and Tatarbunar (1924) armed uprisings were drowned in the blood of the working people. Bessarabian prisons are overflowing with political prisoners and peasants.

The Soviet Union never recognized the capture of Bessarabia by boyar Romania. On March 5, 1918, according to the Iasi peace treaty with Soviet Russia, Romania promised to clear Bessarabia of its troops and return it to our Motherland within 2 months. Romania, with the support of England and France, did not fulfill this treaty.

The time has come to wrest our land from the thieves' hands of boyar Romania, to rescue our brothers and citizens from Romanian captivity. Stolen Bessarabia must be and will be returned to the bosom of its mother - Motherland - the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In order to prepare

the troops for the upcoming military operations, the Political Directorate of the Red Army "obliged the political agencies" to explain to all personnel the foreign policy of the USSR, to expose Romania, which had seized our Soviet land by thieves. We are going to liberate our half-brothers Ukrainians, Russians and Moldavians from the yoke of boyar Romania and save them from the threat of ruin and extinction. By rescuing Soviet Bessarabia from the yoke of the Rumanian capitalists and landlords, we are defending and strengthening our southern and southwestern borders. (Do it the night before the performance)..."

It was required "by all party-political work to create a military upsurge in units, an offensive impulse that ensures the rapid defeat of the enemy (capturing his main forces and clearing Bessarabia) ... The task of the Red Army, as indicated above, is to return Bessarabia to our Motherland and rescue from the boyar captivity of our half-brothers and citizens. On its banners the Red Army brings freedom to the working people from exploitation and national oppression. The workers will be liberated from capitalist slavery, the unemployed will get jobs, farm laborers, landless and landless peasants will receive the lands of the Rumanian landlords, taxes will be lightened and temporarily completely removed. The wild system of "Romanization" of Russians, Ukrainians and Moldovans will be put to an end. The population of Bessarabia will have the opportunity to build their own culture, national in form and socialist in content. Bessarabia will become a Soviet outpost on our southern and southwestern border... Preparations for the offensive must be carried out in the strictest secrecy. Resolutely deal with talkativeness. Everyone should know only what is necessary for him and within the prescribed time ... The texts of the leaflets to the soldiers and the population will be given by the Political Directorate of the Red Army. They will have to be scattered throughout Bessarabia by planes on the first day of the offensive ... "

In order to prevent possible looting and "junk work", it was required "to instruct the personnel on the attitude towards the civilian population" and to prohibit "all military personnel from making any personal purchases in stores, regardless of their faces."

Measures were envisaged for work among the enemy troops, the main goal of which "is to quickly disintegrate his army, demoralize the rear and thus help the command of the Red Army achieve complete victory in the shortest possible time and with the least sacrifice." It was necessary "to show on concrete facts the plight of the working masses, especially farm laborers and landless ones, in Bessarabia, terror and violence in the rear by the police-gendarmerie apparatus ... To explain to the Romanian soldiers the injustice and hopelessness of the war against the USSR and the tasks of the Red Army. To expose the arbitrariness of officers at the front, capitalists, landlords, officials and policemen in the rear... To promote the transition of soldiers to our side and anti-war sentiments in the enemy army. Broadly propagate every fact of the defeat of the Romanian troops. Show the happy and joyful life of workers and peasants in the USSR. Explain how the workers and peasants of the USSR govern the state without capitalists and landlords. Contrast this with the disenfranchised position of the workers and peasants in Rumania. To show the fundamental difference between tsarist Russia, a prison of peoples, and the Soviet Union, a fraternal union of liberated peoples... Political workers are taking a serious test. They must justify the enormous trust placed in them by the party, the government, Comrade STALIN .

The concentration of troops to the border and political work in accordance with this directive, received among the troops on June 25, gave rise to rather militant moods. As the military technician of the 1st rank of the 5th Cavalry Corps Lavrentyev stated, "I look forward to the day when it will be possible to show the power of Soviet weapons in the hands of the working people, and most importantly, to fulfill the responsible task of the party and Great Stalin." According to the detached commander of the 86th cavalry regiment of the 32nd cavalry division Chernyaev, "they would rather have given permission to go closer to the border and engage in battle with the enemies of the Soviet Union." The detached commander of the 14th tank brigade, Rychkov, declared: "If only they would give a combat order, we would show the whole world the strength and glory of our tanks."891 By the beginning of the operation, "the political and moral state of the troops was at a high level. The Red Army soldiers, commanders and political workers understood the historical role of the Red Army in the liberation of the Bessarabian people and were determined to fulfill the task of the Party and the Government of the USSR with honor .

However, the political agencies recorded not only the "correct" understanding of the events by the personnel, but also negative moods. So, for example, Sokolovsky, a Red Army soldier of the 36th tank brigade, said: "Again the war, again we are extending a fraternal helping hand. And we ourselves say that we do not have an imperialist predatory policy. According to the Red Army soldier of the 335th howitzer artillery regiment of the RGK Fedotov, "we only talk against the war, but they themselves are fighting, as a result of which up to 200 thousand people have already died, and we are still preparing a war to kill people, this is criminal"893. Naturally, the political agencies were especially active in combating such sentiments. During the period of concentration of troops, there were facts of desertion of the Red Army. So, only in the troops of the 12th Army from June 11 to June 28, 138 deserters were detained, 71 of whom were convicted (including 5 to be shot). By June 26, the political agencies developed an action plan for the first days of the operation894. To influence the enemy troops, 6 million leaflets were printed, which on June 27 were loaded onto aircraft and prepared for use895 . On the eve of the operation, the Soviet command stepped up enemy

reconnaissance. According to the intelligence department of the KOVO headquarters, from June 1 to June 10, 1940, "Romania intensified the transfer of troops to the Bukovina region and the northern part of Bessarabia"896. Soviet intelligence estimated the size of the Romanian army by the end of June 1940 at 1.6-1.8 million people. It consisted of 12-13 army corps, 40-42 infantry divisions, 1 mountain infantry corps, 5 mountain infantry brigades, 1 fortress brigade, 3 cavalry divisions, 1 horse-motorized division, 2 tank brigades. The Air Force had 1,550-1,600 aircraft, of which 30% were obsolete and non-combat aircraft. By the 20th of June 1940, the intelligence of the Southern Front established the presence of the next grouping of Romanian troops. In the Chernivtsi region and in the north of Bessarabia there were 8-9 infantry divisions, 2 mountain infantry brigades and 1 cavalry brigade. In the Prut grouping (apparently, the 3rd Army), there were 7-8 infantry, 2 cavalry, 1 horse-motorized divisions and 1-2 motorized regiments. Seretskaya

the grouping (4th Army) included 9 infantry and 1 cavalry divisions. Thus, the Romanian Eastern Front included 25 infantry, 3 cavalry, 1 horse-motorized divisions, 2 mountain infantry and 1 motorized brigades .

In fact, 20 infantry, 3 cavalry divisions and 2 mountain infantry brigades were deployed on the Soviet-Romanian border. In the strip from Valya-Visheuliai to Sekiryan, the troops of the 3rd Army (headquarters - Roman) were located as part of the mountain infantry corps (1st, 4th mountain infantry brigades), the 8th and 10th army corps (5th, 6th -I, 7th, 8th, 29th, 34th, 35th Infantry and 2nd Cavalry Divisions). Along the river Prut from Sekiryan to the Black Sea, troops of the 4th Army (headquarters - Tekuch) were deployed as part of the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 11th army corps (2nd, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 21st, 25th, 27th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 37th Infantry, 3rd, 4th Cavalry Divisions). Both armies, which were part of the 1st Army Group, united 60% of the ground forces of Romania and numbered about 450 thousand people⁸⁹⁹ .

The defensive lines of the Romanian troops in Northern Bukovina passed along the borders of the Cheremosh, Prut and Siret rivers. The engineering equipment of these lines consisted of trenches and communication passages, machine-gun platforms and nests, observation and command posts, mortar and artillery positions, anti-tank and anti-personnel obstacles, and a small number of long-term firing points (bunkers). In the north of Bessarabia, no defense system was created, there were only separate trenches and trenches. In the south of Bessarabia, near Bender, in the spring of 1940, the construction of 207 reinforced concrete pillboxes began, of which 133 were already concreted. However, they did not yet have equipment and weapons. In addition, 6 firing points were prepared near Petresht. "In general, the defense system of the Romanian army in Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia was not complete and, with the exception of the natural water barriers of the river. Dniester, r. Cheremosh and r. Prut, did not represent a serious obstacle for the advancing army"⁹⁰⁰ .

For its part, the Romanian command, with the help of air reconnaissance, tried to clarify information about the concentration of Soviet troops, the grouping of which was estimated at 42 rifle, 2 motorized rifle, 11 cavalry divisions, 10 tank and 4 aviation brigades. On June 21–27, Romanian aircraft invaded Soviet airspace 11 times, including 9 times on June 26–27⁹⁰¹. So, for example, at 20.55 on June 21, a Romanian plane violated the border in the Snyatyn area. Having flown at an altitude of 2500 m along the border to the town of Stetsov, he was fired upon by 22 rifle shots from units of the Red Army, turned around and left for Romania. On June 26, a 2-engine Romanian aircraft flew over the border somewhere in the Carpathians and at 8.45 was seen in the Kolomyia region, where it descended to 50–100 meters and flew over the battle formations of the 12th Army towards Chernivtsi. The Soviet fighter aircraft raised for pursuit was not found⁹⁰². Naturally, the Romanian command did not have accurate data on the concentrating grouping of the Red Army, but they perfectly understood the seriousness of the situation.

Germany-Romania-USSR The

military preparations for resolving the Bessarabian issue were accompanied by appropriate diplomatic activity by Moscow. Italy's entry into the war on June 10, 1940 increased its interest in demonstrating cooperation with the USSR, which was also interested in determining the position of Germany and Italy in relation to the Balkans and the possibility of resolving the Bessarabian issue. On June 20, the Italian ambassador in Moscow, A. Rosso, told Molotov about the desire of the Italian government to develop relations with the USSR in the spirit of the Treaty of Friendship, Non-Aggression and Neutrality of 1933 and to help resolve disputes in the Balkans by peaceful means. In response, Molotov declared that the USSR was in favor of settling the Bessarabian issue "by peaceful means, unless, of course, it drags on endlessly."⁹⁰³ This conversation was the first hint for the German embassy in Moscow about the possible actions of the USSR in relation to Romania⁹⁰⁴. On June 21, the Soviet plenipotentiary in Bucharest, in a conversation with the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, in response to the latter's remark about ways to improve Soviet-Romanian relations, noted that, first of all, unresolved political issues, in particular the question of Bessarabia, should be settled. However, the Romanian side did not develop this

theme⁹⁰⁵ . In a conversation with Molotov on June 23, Schulenburg confirmed that, according to Germany, the "consultation agreement" under the non-aggression pact "applies to the Balkans." Having found out that Germany was confirming the last year's agreement on Bessarabia, Molotov informed Schulenburg of the decision of the Soviet government on the Bessarabia issue. "The Soviet Union would like to resolve the issue peacefully, but Romania did not respond" to the Soviet statement of March 29, 1940. Now the Soviet government "wants to raise this issue again before Romania in the near future. Bukovina, as an area inhabited by Ukrainians, is also included in the resolution of the Bessarabian issue. Romania will act wisely if it gives up Bessarabia and Bukovina peacefully. She used it for 21 years, knowing that they did not belong to her, even her allies did not ratify the treaty, according to which Bessarabia was recognized by Romania. Since Japan has not ratified this document, it is not valid. If Rumania does not agree to a peaceful settlement of the Bessarabian question, the Soviet Union will solve it by armed force. The Soviet Union waited a long time and patiently for the resolution of this issue, but now it is impossible to wait any longer. Schulenburg pointed out the importance for Germany of economic supplies from Romania and asked the Soviet government not to take any decisive steps until the German position was indicated. Molotov once again stressed the urgency

issue and stated that the Soviet government expects support from Germany. For its part, the USSR will ensure the protection of Germany's economic interests in Romania .

On the evening of the same day, Molotov informed Schulenburg that "the Soviet government will expect a response from the German government until June 25, inclusive."⁹⁰⁸ On June 24, Ribbentrop drew up a memorandum for Hitler, in which he indicated that in the secret protocol of August 23, 1939, Germany had declared its political disinterest in "these territories" of Southeast Europe, but emphasized its economic interest in the region⁹⁰⁹. Thus, the German leadership had no formal reason to reject or limit Soviet claims. On the same day, the views of the Secretary of State of the German Foreign Ministry E. von Weizsacker were conveyed to Ribbentrop, who proposed that efforts be made to peacefully resolve the issue in the sense of satisfying the claims of the USSR, but in return Moscow had to satisfy the following wishes: "1. Do not cross the section of the river in Bessarabia. the Prut and the lower reaches of the Danube, so as not to jeopardize our interests in the oil-producing regions; 2. Promise to respect the rights and interests of the citizens of the Reich; 3. Promise to protect the interests of the Volksdeutsche in a manner to be determined at a later date; 4. In the event of a military clash, do not bomb the oil production areas. Romania, on the other hand, must indicate that Germany will support the Soviet demands .

On June 25, the Soviet side undertook a more specific diplomatic sounding in relation to Italy. In response to a previous request from the Italian ambassador, Molotov told him that the USSR "has no claims against Hungary" and "considers Hungary's claims against Romania to be justified. The USSR has good, good neighborly relations with Bulgaria. They have reason to become closer. Bulgaria's claims to Romania, as well as to Greece, are justified. The main claims of the USSR to Romania are known. The USSR would like to get from Rumania what is rightfully its own, without the use of force, but the latter will become inevitable if Rumania proves intractable. As for other regions of Rumania, the USSR takes into account the interests of Italy and Germany and is ready to come to an agreement with them on this issue. On June 26, in a conversation with the Soviet plenipotentiary in Rome, Italian Foreign Minister G. Ciano, referring to information about the intentions of the USSR "to resolve the issue of Bessarabia by military means", informed Moscow that Italy "fully recognizes the rights of the USSR to Bessarabia", but is interested in a peaceful resolving this issue. At the same time, the Italian side expressed its readiness, together with Germany, to "advise Romania to accept the Soviet proposals"⁹¹². On June 27, Moscow agreed to this Italian proposal⁹¹³. In the meantime, at 9:00 pm on

June 25, Schulenburg informed Molotov of the following response from Berlin: "1. The German government fully recognizes the rights of the Soviet Union to Bessarabia and the timeliness of raising this question before Rumania. 2. Germany, having great economic interests in Rumania, is extremely interested in resolving the Bessarabian question by peaceful means and is ready to support the Soviet government along this path, exerting influence on Rumania for its part. 3. The question of Bukovina is new, and Germany believes that without raising this question, a peaceful settlement of the question of Bessarabia would be greatly facilitated. 4. The German government, being interested in the numerous Germans living in Bessarabia and Bukovina, hopes that the question of their resettlement will be resolved by the Soviet government in the spirit of the agreement on the resettlement of Germans from Volhynia. Germany expressed its interest in preventing "the transformation of Romania into a theater of military operations"⁹¹⁴. Molotov expressed his gratitude to the German government for its understanding and support of the Soviet demands and stated that the USSR also wanted a peaceful solution to the issue "of Bessarabia and Bukovina, but immediately", since "the Soviet government believes that this issue cannot be dragged out any longer." The wishes of Germany regarding the Germans living there will be taken into account, as well as the economic interests of the Reich. On the issue of Bukovina, Molotov stated that it "is the last missing part of a united Ukraine and that for this reason the Soviet government attaches importance to solving this issue simultaneously with the Bessarabian one," but, as Schulenburg noted in a telegram to Berlin, some change in Soviet demands is quite possible⁹¹⁵.

On June 26, Molotov spoke again with Schulenburg and stated that Soviet demands were "limited to the northern part of Bukovina with the city of Chernivtsi", and added that the Soviet government expected German support for these demands. When Schulenburg noted that the issue would be resolved more easily if the USSR returned to Romania the gold reserves of the Romanian National Bank, taken to Moscow in 1915, Molotov replied that this was out of the question, since Romania had been exploiting Bessarabia for quite a long time. Regarding further actions, Molotov said that he would convey the demands of the USSR to the Romanian envoy in Moscow in the next few days and expected Germany's support in satisfying these demands if Romania did not want war⁹¹⁶. Romania did not yet know that the fate of Bessarabia had already been practically decided. On June 25, the Romanian Prime Minister asked the German envoy in Bucharest if there was any answer to the Romanian statement of June 20. When asked by an interlocutor whether Romania had begun negotiations with the USSR on Bessarabia, Tatarescu said that "the Romanian government and the king are determined to fight rather than just give in" if Moscow demands this territory. American diplomats listened to equally belligerent statements on June 24-26 from their Romanian colleagues⁹¹⁷. True, fears grew in Bucharest due to the fact that repeated alarming appeals to Berlin stumbled upon a wall of silence.

June 26 at 22.00 Molotov handed over to the Romanian envoy G. Davidescu a note from the Soviet government. It stated that "in 1918, Romania, taking advantage of the military weakness of Russia, forcibly torn away from

The Soviet Union (Russia) part of its territory - Bessarabia ... The Soviet Union never put up with the fact of the forcible rejection of Bessarabia, which the government of the USSR repeatedly and openly declared to the whole world. Now that the military weakness of the USSR has receded into the past, and the current international situation requires the speediest resolution of unresolved issues inherited from the past in order to finally lay the foundations for a lasting peace between countries, "the Soviet government suggested to Romania:" 1. Return Bessarabia to the Soviet Union. 2. Transfer to the Soviet Union the northern part of Bukovina within the boundaries, according to the attached map. At the same time, Moscow expressed the hope that Romania "accepts the real proposals of the USSR and thus will make it possible to peacefully resolve the protracted conflict." A response from the Romanian government was expected within 27 June 1918. The attempt of the Romanian envoy to challenge the argument given in the note with references to the Romanian version of the history of Bessarabia and the events of 1918, of course, did not find a response from Molotov, who noted that they "do not correspond to either historical development or the real situation." An attempt to extend the deadline for a response from Bucharest also failed, since the Soviet government had already "waited 22 years" and therefore "hopes that the answer will be given without delay, and if it is positive, then the issue will be resolved peacefully." Davidescu refused to take a map with the line of the new border in Bukovina, referring to the impossibility of transferring it to Bucharest, but wrote down the names of the most important points of this line⁹¹⁹

Late in the evening of June 26, Molotov informed Schulenburg⁹²⁰ of the actions taken against Romania, who on the morning of June 27 tried to clarify "how to understand the demand of the Soviet government that the Romanian response should come today." To this he was explained that "the Soviet troops will cross the Romanian border tomorrow morning if the Romanian government does not give a positive answer to the Soviet demands today"⁹²¹. Having received the Soviet note, the Romanian government turned to Italy, Germany and the allies in the Balkan Entente for support. In addition, Rome and Berlin were required to exercise a restraining influence on Hungary and Bulgaria. On June 27 at 10:30 a.m., Ribbentrop sent an instruction to his envoy in Bucharest, in which he proposed to declare to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania: "The Soviet government informed us that it demands from the Romanian government the transfer of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina to the USSR. In order to avoid a war between Romania and the Soviet Union, we can only advise the Romanian government to give in to the demands of the Soviet government. Similar responses were received from Italy and the countries of the Balkan Entente.

During the meeting of the Crown Council, which opened at 12.30, it turned out that from a military point of view the situation was unpromising. The Romanian command believed that the army would be able to resist, retreating to the river. Siret, on the condition that later she would rely "on the support of a large army of some ally." However, precisely this condition could not be met, since, as Romania was informed, for Germany "military action in the East is currently impossible, since the German army must end the war against England." Bucharest was clearly in no hurry to repeat Finland's recent experience. The vote that took place showed that 11 members of the council were against the adoption of the Soviet ultimatum, 10 were in favor of accepting it, 4 supported the idea of entering into negotiations with Moscow, and the prime minister abstained. True, the conversation that took place after dinner with Carol II showed that Tatarescu was in favor of accepting Soviet demands. Discussing options for action in this situation, Bucharest decided to try to drag out time by entering into negotiations with the USSR. Therefore, as noted in the published communique, "based on the desire to maintain peaceful relations with the USSR, the Council approved the decision of the Romanian government to demand from the Soviet government to fix the date and place where the meeting of delegates of both governments could take place in order to discuss the Soviet note. The answer of the government of the USSR to the proposal of the Romanian government is expected." At the same time, the king signed a decree on the mobilization of the Romanian armed forces from 24:00 on June 28⁹²⁴.

At 11:00 p.m. on June 27, a response was received in Moscow from Bucharest, in which the Romanian government stated "that it is ready to begin immediately, in the broadest sense, a friendly discussion, with common consent, of all proposals coming from the Soviet government." Romania asked to "indicate the place and date" of future negotiations, the delegates for which from the Romanian side will be appointed after a response from Moscow. The note expressed the hope that "negotiations ... will result in the creation of strong relations of good accord and friendship between the USSR and Romania." After listening to such a streamlined answer, Molotov said that "he does not see in the statement made agreement to the Soviet proposals and that he believes that tomorrow the Soviet troops should enter the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina." Davidescu assured him that the Romanian government agreed with the Soviet proposals, but should agree on "the procedure and legal forms for the implementation of these measures." However, all attempts by the Romanian diplomat to agree on future negotiations were unsuccessful, since, as Molotov stated, "now we are talking about political issues, not technical ones." The Soviet side offered to immediately sign an agreement that on June 28 "Soviet troops should occupy certain points" and occupy the rest of the territory in 3-4 days. Accordingly, Romania must guarantee the safety of enterprises, railways, airfields, telegraph and telephone, state and private property, and later "the Soviet-Romanian commission will be able to agree on the details of the implementation of the planned measures"⁹²⁵.

Davidescu refused to sign the agreement, citing his lack of necessary authority.

Then at 1.25 am on June 28, a new Soviet note was handed over to him, which noted the uncertainty of the Romanian government's response, "because it does not say directly that it accepts the proposals of the Soviet government for the immediate transfer of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina to the Soviet Union." However, taking into account the explanations of the Romanian envoy in Moscow, the Soviet government proposed: "1. Within 4 days, starting from 2 pm Moscow time on June 28, to clear the territory of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina to the Romanian troops. 2. Soviet troops for the same period to occupy the territory of Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina. 3. During June 28, Soviet troops will occupy the points: Chernivtsi, Chisinau, Akkerman. 4. The Royal Government of Romania assume responsibility for the safety and prevention of damage to railways, locomotive and wagon fleet, bridges, warehouses, airfields, industrial enterprises, power plants, telegraph. 5. Appoint a commission of representatives" of the parties "to resolve disputes regarding the evacuation of Romanian troops and institutions." Romania's response was to arrive in Moscow no later than 12:00 on June 28⁹²⁶.

Meanwhile, in Bucharest, the discussion of the current situation continued, not excluding the possibility of military resistance from the USSR. However, during the second meeting of the Crown Council, held at 21.00–24.00 on June 27, having realistically assessed the military capabilities of Romania and fearing social upheavals in the event of a war with the USSR, those present by 19 votes against 6 (with 1 abstention) decided to agree to the cession of the territories demanded by the USSR. According to the diary of Carol II, he "closed the meeting of the Council with a short speech in which he said that this was the hardest day of my life, I could not even be glad that my son had passed the bachelor's degree exam. I think that, yielding without resistance almost a quarter (actually 17.1% - *MM*) of the country's territory, we are making a major mistake. Without shaking hands with anyone, I left in deep grief and convinced that the consequences of these decisions would be very deplorable for the country, even if, as Argetoyanu claims, we may achieve what we have lost in the near future." As Tatarescu later declared in parliament, "we decided to retreat from Bessarabia and Upper Bukovina in order to save the Romanian state today and save the future of the Romanian nation from danger"⁹²⁷. The motives behind the decision of the

Romanian leadership were no secret to Moscow. Already on July 2, Soviet intelligence reported that, "according to the information of the resident in Romania, the Romanian king agreed to the ultimatum of the Soviet Union allegedly only after he received assurances from the German and Italian ambassadors that the return of the USSR to Bessarabia and the northern part of Bukovina is a temporary solution, because. Germany and Italy, occupied in the West, cannot provide armed assistance to Rumania. Subsequently, Romania, as compensation for the correct understanding of the moment, will be able to receive not only Bessarabia, but also the Moldavian Republic. The rank and file and junior officers of the Romanian army are satisfied with the peaceful resolution of the conflict, and the generals regard this as a gross mistake of the government"⁹²⁸. Meanwhile, having received a new Soviet note at

2.30 on June 28, the Romanian government turned to Germany with a request to influence the USSR in order to maintain Chernivtsi as part of Romania and extend the evacuation period. Although Berlin promised support, Schulenburg received no instructions. At 1100, Bucharest told Moscow that, in an effort to "avoid serious consequences that would entail the use of force and the opening of hostilities in this part of Europe, he sees himself obliged to accept the conditions of evacuation provided for in the Soviet response." At the same time, Romania asked for an extension of the evacuation period, "taking into account that the evacuation of the territory would be extremely difficult to carry out within four days due to rains and floods that spoiled the communications." A mixed Soviet-Romanian commission could deal with this issue⁹³⁰. At the same time, as M.D. Ereshchenko, Romania formally agreed not to the return of the territory to the Soviet Union, but only to the "evacuation of Romanian troops" from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, which was later used by Bucharest to justify its claims to these territories⁹³¹. Having accepted the text of the Romanian response, Molotov declared that "the Government of the USSR cannot give a delay. If, for technical reasons, it becomes necessary to postpone the implementation of one or another part of the planned measures for several hours, then the question of this may be considered by the mixed Soviet-Romanian commission. Soviet troops will be given instructions to start crossing the border today after 2 pm. The Romanian troops must take measures to ensure that the organization of the advance of the Soviet troops is not disturbed in any way .

The Bessarabian

Campaign While all these diplomatic negotiations were going on, the troops of the Southern Front were completing the last preparations for the operation. Not knowing what the answer from Bucharest would be, Shaposhnikov called Zhukov at 4:00 pm on June 27 and gave him the following instruction: "From the morning of 6/28/40, be ready for action. Actions can be with or without a shot. An order about actions and their nature is additional.

Zhukov: I give the order to occupy the starting position. What about an explanation to the Red Army?

Shaposhnikov: Wait for an explanation. A decision will obviously follow up to 24 hours.

Zhukov: Allow me to put air defense systems on alert.

Shaposhnikov: It is possible to put air defense systems on combat

readiness"⁹³³. Accordingly, the command of the Southern Front gave its troops directive No. A00148, which set the deadline for readiness for the offensive at 3.00 on June 28, but at the same time provided for the option of action

"without a fight" in case of a possible voluntary withdrawal of the Romanian troops. In any case, a "special order" was to be expected⁹³⁴ .

At 17.30 information "about a possible start from the morning of 28.6.40 with or without a shot" was transmitted from the General Staff by telephone to Admiral Galler. At 21.10-21.20 on June 27, Shaposhnikov went into Stalin's office, but since the Romanian answer had not yet been received, he was ordered to wait for further instructions. Accordingly, at 10 p.m., the Chief of the General Staff called Proskurov again and again warned Zhukov that "without a special order, there would not have been a single shot. Wait for special instructions." At 22.30, the Main Naval Headquarters was informed that "you can be calm today, and Haller said that if anything happens, he must be warned in advance, since he needs time." At 23.00, when Molotov was talking with Davidescu, Colonel-General D.A. called the General Staff from Grosulovo. Loktionov and said that "everything is ready and we are all waiting. Will there be instructions? To this Shaposhnikov answered rather dryly: "I don't know anything. Wait for the order and warn everyone not to take a single step without an order."⁹³⁵

At 6.30 on June 28, Moscow received a report from the headquarters of the 9th Army, according to which "during the night of June 27-28, the troops of 9 A took up their original position. Preparations are underway for crossings and equipment of O[angry] P[positions] and K[command] P[points]. a) 71 OUB 4th

brigade, passing into submission to 37th brigade, took its original position in the Tashlyk area. b) in 176th Rifle

Division, the landing groups of 404th and 389th Rifle Regiments advanced to the bend of the Dniester

River. c) the rifle-machine-gun regiment of the 55th brigade is concentrated in

Yassky"⁹³⁶ . At 0905, the General Staff received a report from the headquarters

of the Southern Front: "1. The troops of the Southern Front turned around, took their starting position in accordance with Front Directive No. 00145 and are ready to carry out the order of the People's Commissar.

2. Frontal reserves - 8th, 86th and 100th divisions are completing their concentration, 17th divisions continue to concentrate - in the areas according to report No.

34.

impassable in places.

4. At dawn on June 28, two platoons of the 497th Rifle Regiment, 135th Rifle Division, in the Kanilovka area, 3 km southwest of Staraya Ushitsa, crossed to the southern bank of the Dniester River. After a firefight from both sides, the platoons returned to the northern bank of the Dniester River, having 2 wounded Red Army soldiers. An urgent investigation is underway. Details in a special report"⁹³⁷ .

As a result, it turned out that "in the area of the 5th Army, the commander of the battalion of the 497th joint venture, Captain Balashev, at 3.50 under the cover of up to 11 heavy machine guns from the area of vil. Kanilovka landed on Romanian territory in 3 boats consisting of 57 people. The landing party crossed to the Romanian territory and captured the height near vil. Molodov, up to 1 km deepening into Romanian territory. The Romanians fled, leaving 2 rifles, a Mauser and up to 1000 cartridges. The commander of the regiment, Colonel Shukov, as soon as he found out about this, sent the company commander and returned the landing force back. At 6 o'clock the last boat returned to our territory. As a result of the skirmish on our side, there are two lightly wounded. The investigation showed that the battalion commander, Captain Balashov, knew that without an order he could not fire a single shot. At the same time, he knew that the deadline for completion was set at 3 hours. Just by this time, he lost contact with the regiment and, fearing to be late, on his own initiative began crossing the Dniester .

Since Romania's response was expected by 12:00 on June 28, the troops of the Southern Front continued to be in the concentration areas, awaiting orders. The border guards were the first to learn about the change in the political situation. At 10.00, Deputy Head of the Border Troops of the NKVD of the Ukrainian SSR Major General V.A. Khomenko reported to Moscow that "the Romanians received an order to immediately withdraw from Bukovina and Bessarabia in an organized manner without firing a shot." Since the Romanian guards began to withdraw, Khomenko suggested urgently guarding the bridges and other structures on the Dniester⁹³⁹. However, it was decided not to rush things.

Only after receiving a response from the Romanian government at 11 o'clock did the Soviet troops receive a new task - to occupy Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina without a fight. Accordingly, the command of the Southern Front gave the troops directive No. A00149: "1. The Romanian

government agreed to voluntarily leave Bukovina and Bessarabia and withdraw the Romanian troops for the river Rod.

2. The task of the troops of the Southern Front is to quickly advance to the river. Prut to secure the territory of Bukovina and Bessarabia for

the USSR. 3. To the commander of the 12th army, to throw out mobile units in the first echelon with the task of: a) 4 kk with 24 battalion brigade of BT to occupy the Seret [Siret], Hertsa, Chernovitsa area and gain a foothold on the Seret, Hertsa line. Following 4 kk 60 and 131 divisions, go out: 131 sd - to Chernivtsi and 60 sd to the line of Seret, Hertsa and change units of 4 kk, changing the main forces, shtadiv 60 in the area of Teresheni [Tarashany]. 4 kk to change his 60th rifle division to concentrate in the Storozhinets area. Border on the left - r. Prut (incl.), Hertz. b)

2 kk with 5 battalion brigade to occupy the area of Hertsa (claim.), Lipkany, Zalishchiki and gain a foothold at the turn of the river. Prut from Hertz (claim.) to Lipkana, immediately occupy Khotyn in one cd, send 58 sd in 2 kk, which go to the area - Dinautsy [Dinovtsy] and change units of 2 kk, having a staff and the main forces of the division - Dinautsy. 2 kk on the shift to fully concentrate in the Khotyn area. Shtakor 2 kk - Khotyn.

Border on the left - r. Zbruch, Khotyn, Lipkany (all inclusive for 2 kk). c)

192 Guards Rifle Division, remaining in the Ustseryki area, [forward units] advance to the Rizhin and Seletin [Selyatin] area from the task of firmly holding the mountain passes in the area of Camerale, Frasin, Guard. The border between 192 GSD and 4 KK - Rostock, Guard. 4. The

commander of the 5th army to transport the 49th and 36th tank brigades across the river. Dniester. Tank brigades go to the river. Prut and hold the line of Lipkany (claim.), Zagaikany by simultaneously advancing 80th rifle division from the Studenitsa region and 169th rifle division from the Yampol region to change parts of the 49th and 36th tank brigades, having the main forces of 80th rifle division in the Korjeutsi region and 169 rifle division in the Danul Veche region; to change the 36th and 49th tank brigades, the last to concentrate: the 49th tank brigade in the Larga area, the 36th tank brigade - Bleshteni. From the 130th Rifle Division to advance one joint venture - Soroki, in the subsequent actions of the 80th, 169th and 140th Rifle Divisions of the 9th Army to unite the command of the 36th Rifle Corps, whose

headquarters should be advanced to Balti. The border on the left is

Soroca, Balti, Kalineshti (all for 5 A). 5. To the commander of the 9th army, to throw out moving units in the first echelon with the task of: a) 140 sd with one page regiment in vehicles to reach the river. Prut and gain a foothold at the line of Kalineshti, Skuleni [Skulyany], with the rest of the division's forces to go to the Boksha area. With the release of the division in the Boksha area, transfer it to the commander of

the 36th brigade of the 5th army. b) 35 sk with a mobile echelon consisting of 15 msd, 21 brigade and one cn 95 sd on vehicles to reach the river. Prut with the task: to firmly hold the line: 15th rifle division in the Ungheni, Kastuleni section, joint venture 95th rifle division Nemtseny, Radyukani and 21st brigade Leovo, Gypsy, with the rest of the forces to occupy 35th brigade - 173rd rifle division with 4th brigade of Chisinau; the main forces of the 95th SD - the Karpineni area.

Tripod 95 - Carpineni. Shtakor 35 - Chisinau. The border

on the left is Tiraspol, Selemet, Gypsy. c) mountains. To occupy Bendery with the regiment of the 51st rifle division and the city of

Orgey [Orgeev] - a reinforced rifle and machine-gun battalion of the UR. d) 5 kk go to the area of Izmail, Cahul, Bolgrad and, having 9 kd - Izmail. Danube in the areas: Cahul, Izmail. The

border on the left is the upper reaches of the Dniester estuary, Kyurdo, Kislitsa.

e) 55 sc - 25 sd to take Akkerman and Sarata. Stadiv Sarata. 74 sd go to the Reni, Izmail, Bolgrad and change parts of the cavalry. QC to shift to concentrate in the Cahul area.

6. The rest of the Southern Front to remain in the areas they occupy, except for the 141st Rifle Division, which will be nominated in the Zalishchyky region.

7. The rate of movement of troops introduced into Bessarabia and Bukovina will be indicated additionally. 8.

When troops move on the territory of Bukovina and Bessarabia, take measures to clear mine areas, for which purpose reinforce the first echelons of troops with sappers and agree with the command of the Romanian army: a) on guides, b) on maps and diagrams and c) on mined areas.

9. In order to organize the rapid advance of troops, do not take bulky rear areas with you, leave all excess property of the units in place. The material part of the artillery, over 122 mm calibers, do not take. Limit military reserves - 1/2 bq, two refuelings of fuel and a three-day dacha. The fighters have a lightweight display approved by the order of the NPO.

10. On the move, observe strict order, establish exemplary combatant crowding and clarity - do not get out of order on a campaign when passing settlements, do not make halts near settlements, commanders of all degrees during the entire movement to be in their places.

11. Each regiment to have an orchestra with them and settlements to pass with music and songs. 12. Pay special attention to the appearance of the fighters and their smartness - everyone should be shaved, cleaned, in neat clean summer clothes and helmets, left poorly dressed in the rear of the division and not taken out to Bukovina and Bessarabia, all personnel and units should be pre-examined by the corps commanders and military councils of the armies.

13. In view of the application of the second option of action and the movement of troops on the basis of an agreement, my order No. 00126 on the chiefs of garrisons and their functions should be canceled. I appoint senior commanders of units and formations that operate in a given area as heads of garrisons of settlements, their functions are in accordance with position on the chiefs of garrisons.

For guidance and to facilitate the issuance of orders for the garrison, issue a supply of copies of the draft order for the garrison for each division. 14. Take all necessary

measures immediately and be ready to fulfill this order by 12.00 28.6.40. The order to put into practice by special order "940, which was transmitted by telephone to the headquarters of the armies of the Southern Front at 12.10–12.18 on June 28/941 .

Accordingly, at 13.00, the border guards received an order from the commander of the Southern Front "immediately take all border bridges on the Cheremosh, Prut, Dniester rivers under guard by border units. Identify the laying of mines and clear the bridges. Having taken the guard, put up reinforced outfits on both banks .

Based on the directive of the commander of the Southern Front, the army commanders issued their own orders to the troops. For example, in the 9th Army at 13.15 combat order No. 2 was issued, specifying the tasks of the troops:

"1. The Romanian government voluntarily agreed to leave Bukovina and Bessarabia, to withdraw its troops beyond the river. Rod.

2. On the right, the 5th army occupies the northern part of Bessarabia. The border with it is Soroki, Tsypleshti, Balti, Kalineshti. 3. The task of

the 9th army - a quick advance to the river. Prut on the front of Iasi, Galati assign to the USSR the middle and southern part of Bessarabia.

4. 140 rifle divisions with advanced moving units within a day through Stefanesti and [Ki]shkareny reach the river. Prut and gain a foothold at the Kalineshti-Skuleni line, with the rest of the units to reach the Skumpia area in three crossings. With access to the indicated area, the division becomes subordinate to the commander of the 36th brigade, whose headquarters is Balti. 5. 35 sk, 173

sd and 95 sd, 15 msd and 4 brigade by the end of 29.6 moving parts reach the line of the river. Prut: a) 15th Motor Rifle Division in the Vulpeshti, Koshtuleni section, shtadiv - Ketireni. Overnight [from] 28 to 29.6 - Chisinau; b) The mobile detachment of the 95th rifle division - RB, TB, motorized artillery, infantry and sappers in vehicles go to the crossing near Leuseni. Overnight from 28 to 29.6 - Chisinau; c) 4 tbr by

the evening of 28.6 completely concentrate Chisinau; d) 173rd Rifle Division to cross the Dniester near Grigoriopol and by the end of 28.6 concentrate in the area of Korzhevo, Balabanesti, on 29.6 cross Chisinau; e) The 95th Rifle Division is crossed

by the main forces on 28.6 [at] Tashlyk and by the end of the day is concentrated in the area of the hut. Nakharova, Nov. Romanovka, Spey. In the future, moving along the route of Chimisheny, Bachoy, Lovena, Gancheshti, Karpiyany, go to the river. Prut by the morning of 1.7 in the Nemtsava, Leuseni, Tomai section, having the main forces in the Karpiyany region, holding the Karpiyany. 6. 51 sd to transport the rifle regiment with one

artillery battalion and an armored train by the end of 28.6 take the Bendery region, where the garrison is located, the remaining parts of the 51st Rifle Division remain in Tiraspol, Parkany.

7. 14th brigade by the end of 28.6 cross the Bendery bridge and focus on lodging for the night in the area of Tanatara, Ursoy. By the morning of 30.6, moving along the route of Novo-Kaushani, Troitskoe, Cimislia, Kochalia, go out with advanced units [on] the river. Prut on the front of the Leovo-Gypsy cape, the main forces - Tigech, Kochalia. Stabrig - Kochalia.

8. 5 kk by the evening of 28.6, start moving forward units along the crossings of the 7th brigade and the Bendery bridge, concentrate in the area: 9 cd - Cahul, Reni, main forces - Cahul, 32 cd - Izmail. Shtakor - Bolgrad. Traffic lane - on the right: Bendery, Koshkalia, Romanovo, Kongaz, Cahul, on the left: Merinesti, Manzyr, Berezina, Kubey, Izmail. Advance units to reach the indicated areas by the end of

30.6, the main forces - by the morning of 2.7. Upon reaching the area of Reni, Izmail, parts of the 74th corps should concentrate on Cahul. 7 sk immediately establish all crossings for the passage of units 5 kk, remaining with your units in place. 9. 55 sk to the outcome of 28.6 25 rd take Ackerman and Kol[oniya] Old[aya] Sarata. Stadiv -

Kol[ony] Old[aya] Sarat. 74 sd is transported for 25 sd and, following the route - Ackerman, Col [oniya] Old [aya] Sarata, Kubey, to the end

4.7 go [to] the area of Reni, Izmail, Bolgrad, changing parts of 5 kk. Shtadiv - Bolgrad.

10. The remaining units of the 9th Army, not listed in this order, remain in place..." 943 saved the working people of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina from a bloody war and resolved the issue of returning Bessarabia to the mighty family of the Soviet Union by peaceful means. The troops were ordered to remain vigilant and conduct active political work among the local population, for which special groups of political workers were created⁹⁴⁴. "With the greatest joy and approval, the fighters, commanders and political workers met the message of our Government on the peaceful settlement of the Soviet-Romanian conflict." Rallies and talks were held in all units and divisions on this occasion.

Paklanov, a Red Army soldier of the 187th Infantry Regiment of the 72nd Infantry Division, believed that "only the powerful forces of the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army, approaching the very border, forced the Romanian authorities to come to their senses and accept our legitimate demands." According to the Red Army soldier of the 150th howitzer artillery regiment Kushnerev, "The agreement reached once again confirmed the wise foreign policy of the world, which is steadily being put into practice under the leadership of Comrade Stalin by our Government." As the Red Army soldier of the 264th corps heavy artillery regiment Shirshov stated, "for the wise policy of Stalin, for the party that ensured a peaceful life for our people and the liberation of our brothers from the oppression of the bourgeoisie, all as one are ready to fight any enemy until it is completely destroyed." Lieutenant of the 26th separate reconnaissance battalion Ryvkin believed that "the liberation of Bessarabia from the oppression of the Romanian boyars once again showed our power and the wise Stalinist foreign policy."

Similar opinions were noted in parts of the 95th Infantry Division. As Reshetnikov, a Red Army soldier of the 161st Infantry Regiment, believed, "it's good that this issue was peacefully resolved, this is in the interests of the workers of the USSR and the workers of Romania, because the capitalists would not have fought, and only the workers of Romania would have borne the victims." Karaev, a Red Army soldier of the 90th Infantry Regiment, said: "I knew that the issue of Bessarabia would be resolved peacefully, because our government always pursues a policy of peace, and the Romanians could not resist our army, they felt it." The Red Army soldier of the 13th separate reconnaissance battalion, Bondarenko, believed that "indeed, Stalin's peace policy is very wise. Now the question of Bessarabia has been resolved peacefully, without any casualties. Comrade Stalin took care of the liberation of the working people of Bessarabia from

oppression of the Romanian boyars. According to the Red Army soldier of the 404th Infantry Regiment of the 176th Infantry Division Kuzmenko, "Now everyone began to reckon with the strength of the Soviet Union. Our people have achieved this because we are led by the Bolshevik Party, headed by Comrade Stalin." At the same time, voices were heard: "But it's still a pity, we were preparing, preparing, but we didn't have to fight"945 .

At 2 pm on June 28, Soviet troops began an operation to occupy the territory of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. Already at 14.30, the headquarters of the Southern Front reported to Moscow that the 5th tank brigade and the 58th rifle division in the Snyatyn area, the 24th tank brigade in the Knyazh area, the 141st rifle division moved to the Zalizhchikov region, and from the 5th army to Bessarabia - the 80th rifle division in the Ustye, Sokol, Bolshaya Muksha region and the 169th rifle division in the Yampol, Soroka region. However, problems arose with the crossing of the troops of the 9th Army946 .

At 17.30, by direct wire from Grosulov, Senior Adjutant General of the People's Commissar of Defense, Lieutenant General V.M. Zlobin transmitted Timoshenko's order to the headquarters of the Southern Front: "1. Ferry 9 A is late. The crossing is poorly organized and threatens to collapse. 2. The commander was ordered to send reconnaissance fighters to the airfields of Chisinau and Akkerman, and then land fighter units there. 3. The People's Commissar ordered to immediately reconnoiter the Chisinau airfield from his side and to land an airborne brigade there today. The head of the Operational Department of the Front Headquarters, Lieutenant-General G.K., who received the message, Malandin reported this to Zhukov, who himself approached the apparatus and handed over to the people's commissar of defense for a report: "1. Advanced units of Cherevichenko on the way to Chernivtsi. The delay was due to very bad and washed out roads. 2. Hotin is busy. 3. Balti will be occupied by Gerasimenko's units and aviation at 20.00. 4. Today it is impossible to land an airborne assault in Chisinau, because from the airfield of the airborne brigade 4 hours of flight. It is impossible to plant at night in Chisinau. I ask Kondratenko to inform how Boldin is correcting the matter.

Zlobin: Boldin has not yet done anything to speed up the crossing. Now he is thinking. Make a decision and let me know. All"947 .

In accordance with the orders received, the troops of the 12th Army advanced deep into Northern Bukovina in the afternoon of June 28. At 17.30, an armored train of the NKVD railway regiment with a battalion of the 58th rifle division arrived in Chernivtsi, where the 5th tank brigade entered a little later, which, having passed the city, together with a separate reconnaissance battalion of the 58th rifle division, moved on and towards evening, having passed Magala, reached the area Toporovtsy, Redkovtsy. The main forces of the 58th Infantry Division crossed the border north of Snyatyn and, moving southeast, reached the Kitsman and Viteuvka areas. By 21:00, 23 I-16 aircraft of the 12th Fighter Aviation Regiment had relocated to the airfield near Chernivtsi, and at 19:30, an advanced team of the 255th Air Base was sent there. The 24th tank brigade was unable to cross the river in full strength. Cheremosh, and instead of it, the 23rd Tank Brigade with an airborne battalion was sent from Kuta, which, together with the advanced units of the 4th Cavalry Corps, occupied Storozhinets. The main forces of the 34th Cavalry Division were on the way to Storozhinets, and the 16th Cavalry Division was south of Vashkovtsy. The armored train arrived at Novoselitsa at 24:00. The 141st Rifle Division occupied the bridge at Zalizhchikov and advanced southeast to Kadobeste. The 2nd Cavalry Corps moved to the border in a forced march, and by the end of the day the advance detachment of the 3rd Cavalry Division entered Berkhomitka, the main forces of the division were in the Snyatyn area, and the 5th Cavalry Division approached from Gorodenka to Yasenev-Polny. The 60th Rifle Division was at the crossings across the river. Cheremosh in Vyzhnitsa and Ispas.

At the front of the 5th Army, border guards crossed to Khotyn at 15.45, and at 17.30 units of the Kamenetz-Podolsk UR began to arrive. At the crossing near Khotyn, a pontoon boat with 30 fighters and ammunition was carried by the current onto the ferry cable and capsized. As a result, 16 servicemen of the 39th machine-gun battalion of the Kamenetz-Podolsky UR drowned, 5 light machine guns, 16 rifles and 2,000 rifle cartridges were lost. The 80th Rifle Division crossed the Dniester in the Ustye, Sokol, Bolshaya Muksha regions and, having passed Lenkovtsy and Kelmentsy, reached the Novoselitsa, Volchenets, Lukachany regions with their 77th and 153rd rifle regiments. The remaining parts of the division near the mouth until 21:00 made a pontoon crossing for the 49th tank brigade. To the east, near Maryanovka, at 4 pm, the 305th Infantry Regiment of the 44th Infantry Division crossed the Dniester, which by 01:00 on June 29 completed the construction of a pontoon bridge for the 36th Tank Brigade. The delay in guiding the crossings was due to both the poor preparation of the pontooners and the strong current of the river swollen after the rains. The 169th Infantry Division at 1700 began crossing the Dniester in the region of Kosovtsy, Soroka, and in the evening reached Flexer, Skinyany, where they camped for the night. During the crossing of the 556th rifle regiment of the division, 3 Red Army soldiers drowned. The 434th rifle regiment of the division was transferred from Mogilev-Podolsky to the Yaruga, where it crossed the river. The 371st Rifle Regiment of the 130th Rifle Division occupied Soroki and proceeded to build a pontoon bridge across the Dniester. Meanwhile, the advanced units of the 147th, 176th and 30th rifle divisions of the 37th rifle corps of the 9th army crossed the Dniester near Tashlyk at 14-15 hours and ensured the guidance of the crossings, which was delayed due to the poor training of the pontooners. As a result, the crossing of troops on pontoon bridges began only after 17 hours. The 435th and 798th rifle

regiments of the 140th rifle division crossed the river at Solonchen and Rezina by 22:00, respectively, and by 4:00 in the morning on June 29 they advanced to the area of Soldaneshty, Syrkov. At Grigoriopol at 18.20-20.00, the 95th Infantry Division crossed, which went to the Budeshty, Kolonitsa, Sagaydak area. While crossing the Dniester of the 13th separate reconnaissance battalion of the division, in the middle of the river, the engine of a floating tank stalled, which sank. Another floating tank sank 10-15 meters from the Bessarabian coast.

The crews were rescued, the second tank was pulled ashore and put into operation. At Grigoriopol, by 20.30, the main forces of the 173rd Infantry Division completed the crossing. The 15th motorized rifle division and the 4th tank brigade began crossing south of Tashlyk at 20:00, and their forward units entered Chisinau at 22:00. On the approach to the city, 1 Red Army soldier was killed in an overturned armored vehicle of the reconnaissance battalion of the division. During the night, the main forces of the 15th motorized division, the 4th tank brigade, the forward detachment of the 95th and the mobile detachment of the 51st rifle divisions pulled up to the city.

The 287th Infantry Regiment of the 51st Infantry Division occupied Bendery at 17.40, where 16 Romanian soldiers appeared at the headquarters of the regiment, who surrendered their weapons and declared their unwillingness to leave for Romania. The procedure for transferring the city to the Soviet units took place with a large crowd of people who, seeing the Romanian general approaching, began to shout: "Shoot him!" Under these conditions, the Romanian representative considered it best to leave the square without waiting for the ceremony to be completed. The 18th and 30th tank regiments of divisions of the 5th cavalry corps, which had concentrated in Farladen, and the 14th tank brigade, which reached the Ursoy area, crossed over the railway bridge in Bendery from 20:00. At 21.47 a battalion of the 35th Infantry Regiment of the 74th Infantry Division crossed over to Akkerman. From 17.20, the construction of a pontoon bridge across the Tsaregradsky arm of the Dniester estuary began. The assembled parts of the bridge were alternately pulled up to the girl, but during a strong storm the cables broke several times, and the construction of the bridge was completed only by 4 o'clock in the morning on June 29.

In the meantime, following the order of the People's Commissar of Defense, at 18.35, 9 I-16 aircraft landed at the Chisinau airfield, and by 20.15 another 18 aircraft from the 146th Fighter Aviation Regiment were relocated there. Having received information about the flight of aircraft to Chisinau, the advance detachment of the 130th air base crossed the Dniester and moved towards the city. At 19:10–19:40, 27 I-16 aircraft of the 67th Fighter Aviation Regiment moved to the airfield near Akkerman. On June 28, Galler reported to Shaposhnikov that in connection

with the peaceful resolution of the Bessarabian issue, the Black Sea Fleet had been transferred from readiness No. 1 to readiness No. 2 from 15.00. The ships intended to assist the flank of the Red Army and block the coast of Romania are concentrated in Odessa and on the Tenderovsky raid. 2 submarines were deployed in positions near Constanta and 2 - on the approach to the Bosphorus. According to the intelligence of the fleet, 2 destroyers, a submarine and a gunboat of the Romanian Navy were seen in the area between Sulina and about. Serpentine, 1 gunboat - in Constanta. The Turkish fleet is in the Bosphorus and has not gone to sea⁹⁴⁸. At 23.00 on June 28, the command of the Southern Front issued directive No. 00150 to its troops, in which

stated: "1.

Romanian troops continue to retreat beyond the river. Rod. 2.

The armies of the Southern Front, having crossed the state border at 14.00 28.6, occupied Chernivtsi, Khotin, Soroki by the end of the day, Chisinau, Akkerman and Storozhinets and Balti regions.

3. To the armies of the front, acting in the composition established by my directive No. 00149, from the morning of 29.6 continue movement and occupy northern Bukovina and Bessarabia and by the end of 30.6 reach the new state border.

4. 12 armies on 29.6 reach the line of Seleti[n], Terebleshti [Porubnoe], st. Kamenka, st. Construction sites, st. Lipcans and firmly hold it. With access to this line, have the main groupings: 4 kk with 23 brigade in the Storozhinets area, 60 bd - Teresheni [Tarashany], 131 bd - Chernivtsi, 58 bd with 5 brigade - Dinautsy [Dinovtsy] and 2 kk - Khotyn. Withdraw the headquarters of the 17th brigade on 29.6 - Chernivtsi and subordinate to the command of the 17th brigade - 131, 60 and 58 rifle divisions. Border on the left - r. Zbruch,

Khotyn, r. Prut (all for the 12th army). 5. 5 armies - 36 sk consisting of 80,

169, 140 sd with 49 and 36 brigade to reach the 29.6 line of art. Lipcany (claim.), art. Reucela.

The main forces and headquarters should be: 80 sd - Korzheutsi, 169 sd - Glodeni and Balti and 140 sd - Kishkaren.

49 and 36 tank brigades with the exit of rifle units to the river. Prut concentrate in areas - 49 brigade - Larga, 36 brigade - Bleshteni.

The border on the left is Botushany, Skuleni.

6. 9th army - go on 29.6 to the line of Pyrlitsa, Gancheshty, Dezginzhe. The main forces of the active troops should have: 15 motor rifle divisions in the Pyrlitsa area, 95 rifle divisions - Gancheshty, 21 brigade - Dezginzhe and 173 rifle divisions - Chisinau. Combine all these compounds in 35 sc.

5 kk 29.6 reach the line Kongaz, Bolgrad, Furmanka. 55th Rifle

Division, occupying 25th Rifle Division Ackerman and Sarata, withdraw 74th Rifle Division

to the Akmangit area. 7. By order of the beginning. Air Force by 10.00 29.6 to drop paratroopers 201 adbr in the Bolgrad area with the task - occupy the Bolgrad region.

8. During the occupation of Bukovina and Bessarabia, units should move on the tails of the departing Romanian troops. 9.

Establish exemplary order in all garrisons of occupied Bessarabia and Bukovina, establish guard duty and take under guard all the property left by the Romanian troops, state institutions and landowners. 10. Immediately take measures to repair roads and bridges in areas occupied by troops. The order of the beginning VOSO immediately start re-fitting to a wide gauge railway. road sections: a) Tiraspol - Chisinau; b) Zalishchyky-Chernivtsi, Lipkany-Balti; c) Mogilev-Podolsk-Balti; d) Balti-Chisinau; e) Balti-Rybnitsa; f) Bendery-Bolgrad; g) Akkerman-Romanesti [Romanovo], Felciu [Falciu].

11. According to the scheme approved by me, from June 29, the Air Force will begin construction of field airfields at the rate of 15 IAP and 5 ShAP.

12. From 29.6 remove the threat from the air. 13. Organize mine clearing of roads and areas from 29.6, remove obstacles and blockages and restore broken bond . "

Having received a new directive, the headquarters of the 9th Army at 5.10 on June 29 issued combat order No. 3, clarifying the instructions of

the front headquarters: "1. Romanian troops continue a hasty retreat beyond the river. Rod. 2. On the right, it continues advancing to the river. Prut 5th army, the border with it is the same. 3. The 9th Army on 29.6 moves to the line of Pyrlitsa, Gancheshty, Dezginzhe with mobile units. 4. 35 brigade consisting of 15 motor rifle divisions, 95 and 173 rifle divisions, 4 brigade by the end of 29.6 concentrate: a) 15 motor rifle divisions in the Pyrlitsa area, throwing forward units to the river. Prut in the Petresti, Danuceni area; b) 95 sd - Gancheshty; c) 173rd rifle division and 4th brigade - Chisinau. 5. 5 kk mobile tank units by the end of 29.6 reach the Kagul-Bolgrad line; main Leipzig, 32 cd - Tarutino, Berezina. 6. 55 sk: a) with

the forces of 74 sd, take the Akkerman area, Col [oniya] Old [aya] Sarata; b) 25 RD by the end of 29.6 withdraw to the Akmangit area. 7.

By order of the beginning. Front Air Force by 10.00 29.6 paratroopers of 201 adbr will be dropped in the area Bolgrad with the task of occupying the Bolgrad region..."950

Fulfilling the directive, the troops of the Southern Front resumed their advance on the morning of June 29. On the front of the 12th Army, the 5th Tank Brigade set out at 7 o'clock in the morning in the direction of Novoselitsa and, moving further along the river. Prut, by 10 o'clock entered Lipkany. By the end of the day, the brigade concentrated in the area of Mamalyga, Lipkany, Stalnovtsy. The 23rd tank brigade at 7 o'clock in the morning set out from Storozhinets in the direction of Siret and at 10 o'clock entered Kamenka. On the way, the brigade ran into the tail of a column of Romanian units and detained 500 soldiers and officers. The tank battalion of the 24th tank brigade, approaching the western outskirts of Hertsa at 15.30, was fired upon by the Romanians. During the ensuing skirmish, 5 Romanian soldiers were killed. The 7th and 8th Romanian infantry divisions, retreating in front of the front of the 12th Army, faced the problem of maintaining military discipline. In one of the columns of the 7th Infantry Division, up to 3 thousand soldiers fled, taking with them the horse train, and no more than 200 people went to Romania. Soviet troops picked up up to 200 rifles, 3 machine guns, about 50 thousand rifle cartridges and several hundred hand grenades. Two Romanian platoons voluntarily surrendered their weapons and refused to leave for Romania. In the area of the village of Sergieny, the Romanian captain tried to provoke an armed clash by giving the command to take up defense. The Soviet commander ordered to move machine guns into position, seeing which the Romanians fled. The local population turned to the Soviet command with complaints about the looting of the departing Romanian units, which in the Tarashan region shot 3 residents who resisted the seizure of horses.

The cavalry squadron and the rifle company of the 192nd mountain rifle division reached Selyatyn at 1 pm and began to push outposts to the Cameral-Frasin am Falkeu-Strazha line. The main forces of the division concentrated in Ustseryki. The 60th Infantry Division completed the crossing over the river. Cheremosh and moved in two columns from Kuta to Storozhinets and from Vashkovtsy to Chernivtsi. The 58th Infantry Division advanced towards Chernivtsi. In the area of the village of Rogozna, on the way to Sadgora, the 138th anti-tank division of the division met with armed resistance from the Romanian cavalry. In the skirmish, 2 Romanian soldiers were killed, 1 wounded, and 19 soldiers and 1 ensign were detained, 3 horses were killed, 1 machine gun, 13 carbines and 19 horses were captured. By the end of the day, the division reached the Mamornitsa area. The main forces of the 34th cavalry division of the 4th cavalry corps concentrated in Storozhinets at 9.00, mobile detachments were sent to the Krasnoilsk-Porubnoye-Gertsia line by 14 o'clock (according to the cavalry regiment with a tank company). After a night march, the 16th Cavalry Division approached Chernivtsi at about 09:00 in the morning, and by 14:00 it concentrated in the Voloka area. The advanced units of the 2nd Cavalry Corps at 16 o'clock went to the river. The rod at the Tarasovites. The 3rd Cavalry Division, having made a night march, was in the Magala area by 9.30, and by the end of the day concentrated in Novoselitsa, pushing forward detachments to the Tarasovtsy-Kostycheny-Shandryany line. The 5th Cavalry Division reached the Yurkovtsev area by 10 o'clock in the morning, and by evening entered Khotyn. The headquarters of the 2nd Cavalry Corps is located in Chernavka. The 131st Rifle Division continued to concentrate in Chernivtsi. The administration of the 17th Rifle Corps was also relocated there, and at 16.30 the operational group of the headquarters of the 12th Army arrived. On the front of the 5th Army, by 6 o'clock in the morning, the 49th tank brigade reached the Larga area, and at 13 o'clock the main forces of the brigade concentrated in Korzheutsy. By the end of the day, forward detachments were deployed on the Prut from Shirovtsy to New Bedrazh. The 36th tank brigade reached Brichany by 6.05, concentrated in Oneshty at 9.15, and the forward detachments with the 25th rifle regiment of the 44th rifle division attached as a landing party deployed along the river by 14.00. Prut from Old Bedrazh to Costesti. On this day, 2 Red Army soldiers died in an overturned tank, as well as the pilot of the U-2 communications aircraft that had crashed. The 80th Rifle Division reached the Balasineshty, Korzheutsy area.

The advance of the consolidated detachment of armored vehicles of the 169th rifle division, sent to occupy the city of Balti, was delayed by the column of the 4th Romanian cavalry division slowly retreating to Falesti, overtaking which the advance detachment entered the city at 4.30. As it turned out, at 5 p.m. on June 28, the only

a bridge connecting northern and southern Bessarabia across the Reut River, and the city with a railway station. As the commission for the survey of the blown up bridge found out, preparations for the explosion, which destroyed 3 spans (46 m), began on June 18. By the end of the day, the main forces of the 680th and 556th regiments of the 169th rifle division concentrated in the Riscani area. On the same day, the command of the 36th Rifle Corps arrived in Balti, and 4 I-15 aircraft of the 3rd Attack Aviation Regiment were relocated to the Stryba airfield northwest of the city. On the front of the 9th Army, the

140th Infantry Division continued to move towards Kishkaren. At the crossing near Rybnitsa, the rise of water in the Dniester led to a rupture of the pontoon bridge, which had to be rebuilt. The 15th motorized rifle division set out from Chisinau at 6 o'clock in the morning and by 19 o'clock the advanced tank and 321st motorized regiments reached the Korneshty, Pyrlitsa area. Near Kornesht, parts of the division were fired upon by a Romanian detachment. The Soviet units returned machine-gun fire. In the shootout, 2 Red Army soldiers were killed, 12 were killed and 16 Romanian soldiers were wounded. The conflict was resolved on the spot by representatives of the parties. The division's communications plane was fired upon by a Romanian armored train at the station. The railing between Korneshty and Pyrlitsa. The administration of the 35th Rifle Corps, the 173rd Rifle Division and the 4th Tank Brigade were completely concentrated in Chisinau. The 46th tank battalion was sent from the tank brigade through Gancheshty to the crossing at Falciu, which by the end of the day concentrated in Cania, where it controlled the withdrawal of the Romanian troops.

By the end of the day, the 95th Infantry Division had reached the area of Milesty, Costesty. The troops of the 5th Cavalry Corps completed the crossing of the Dniester in the morning. The 9th cavalry division crossed from 2.30 north of Bender, and the 32nd cavalry division - from 5.30 near Krasnogorka. By the end of the day, the corps with its main forces reached the Petrovka, Sturdzyany area. In the Manzry area, units of the 32nd Cavalry Division detained a group of Romanian servicemen on 40 wagons, from whom 14,200 lei, 86 rifles, 4 pistols, 117 bayonets, 5,000 cartridges and various products were seized, as well as a safe with secret documents. The tank regiments of the 9th and 32nd cavalry divisions reached Cimislia and Romanov. In connection with the landing of the 204th airborne brigade in the Bolgrad region, the corps was ordered not to advance further than the Cimislia-Comrat-Romanovo line, and the 14th tank brigade returned to the eastern bank of the

Dniester and concentrated in Parkany. To the south, on the front of the 55th Rifle Corps, the 74th Rifle Division completed the crossing of the Dniester Estuary and occupied the area of Palenka, Karlovka, Akkerman. To the north of the estuary, at 0300, units of the 360th Infantry Regiment of the division crossed the Dniester and occupied the Khan-Kishlo region. On their right flank, by 6:00 a.m., units of the combined rifle and machine-gun regiment of the Tiraspol UR and the combined artillery regiment of the Odessa Artillery School crossed the river, occupying the Korkmazy area. After 4 o'clock in the morning, the crossing of units of the 25th Infantry Division began along the pontoon bridge across the Tsaregradskoye arm, which by the end of the day reached the Benkendorf, Postal, and Cherkesy regions with the main forces. During the day, the

headquarters of the 9th Army was relocated to Tiraspol. Meanwhile, the commander of the Air Force of the Southern Front, Lieutenant General F.A. At 20:00 on June 28, Astakhov gave a preliminary order to the commander of the 29th Air Brigade to land troops in the Bolgrad area. True, instead of the 201st, it was ordered to use the 204th airborne brigade. As the commander of the 204th brigade, Colonel I.I. Gubarevich, from 4 a.m. on June 29, the personnel of the brigade were withdrawn to the aircraft and stayed there until departure, having one ammunition load of cartridges and two daily rations of canned meat and vegetables, concentrates and crackers. 1,436 paratroopers were placed in 99 TB-3 aircraft of the 1st, 3rd, 7th and 14th heavy bomber air regiments, and at 8.00-9.30 several echelons of aircraft started towards southern Bessarabia. 97 aircraft reached the target, as 2 were forced to land in Vinnitsa and Chisinau. The landing was carried out from 12.30 to 14.30 on June 29, 10 km north of Bolgrad. In total, 1,372 paratroopers were landed, armed with 1,065 rifles, 72 light machine guns, 246 pistols, 187 Degtyarev submachine guns, 18 radio stations, 28 telephones, 213,000 rifle cartridges and 110,700 pistol cartridges. During the drop, 1 fighter opened his parachute early and, hitting the stabilizer of the aircraft, died. 5 paratroopers received leg fractures, 15 dislocations and sprains, and 1 concussion. After the landing, 95 aircraft returned to the airfield, and 2 made an emergency landing in Chisinau and Vinnitsa. By 16.30 the brigade concentrated at Bolgariysk, but even before that, the 3rd battalion was sent to Bolgrad, and the 1st battalion to the Troyanov Val station, which were occupied at 18.30. The landing was enthusiastically received by the population

and became a clear demonstration of the strength of the Red Army. In Bolgrad, which joyfully met the Soviet paratroopers, the local Romanian security battalion voluntarily disarmed and went home. Following this, the cavalry squadron of the 3rd Romanian Cavalry Division, which approached the city, was dismounted and the horses were returned to the population. At 18.35, the 204th brigade received an order from the Southern Front to occupy the cities of Reni and Cahul, located 40-50 km from the landing site. At 20 o'clock the 2nd battalion moved to Reni in marching order. At 21:00, the Romanian command filed a protest against the landing in their rear⁹⁵¹.

At 0.15 on June 30, Shaposhnikov informed Timoshenko and Zhukov, who were in Tiraspol, about the extension of the evacuation of the Romanian troops until 14.00 on July 3952. Accordingly, the command of the Southern Front issued order No. 00151, which demanded:

"1. The armies of the front, continuing to advance to the new border, by the end of 29.6 occupied northern Bukovina and

finish the occupation of Bessarabia.

Order: 1) 12

A to advance by the end of 30.6 60 sd to the area of Teresheni [Tarashany] and advance units of 60 and 58 sd to gain a foothold along the state border in the Fontina Alba sector, st. Tereblishti [Porubnoe], Hertsa, Lipkany. With the release of advanced rifle units to the state border, tank brigades should concentrate: 23 brigade - Storozhinets, 5 brigade - Stavchany. Battalion 24 brigade to join their brigade. Cavalry corps remain in the areas they occupy. The border on the left is the old one. 2) 5

A to continue the implementation of the previously assigned task (order 00150) and advancing to the river. Prut advanced rifle units to firmly gain a foothold along the state border in the area (claim.) Lipkany, Skuleni [Skulyany].

The border on the left is Botushani,

Skuleni. 3) 9 A forward units 35 sk to the outcome of 30.6 to occupy and gain a foothold along the river. Prut in the area (suit.) Skuleni, Gypsy, with the main forces of 15 rd md in Pyrlitsa, 95 rd in Ganceshty, 5 kk 30.6 concentrate in the area of Cimishlia, Comrat, Romanovo.

204 adbr, having the main forces in Bolgrad, to occupy and hold Cahul and Reni, with strong detachments of up to 300 people. every. 55 sk, occupying 25 sd area Kol[oniya] Star[aya] Sarata, Akkerman, one sd 74 sd by cars should be thrown to the Izmail area by the end of 30.6, providing the state border along the line of the river. Danube, with the rest of the division's forces, with a forced march, go to the area indicated in order

00150. Shtakor 55 sk 30.6 go to Kol[oniya] Star[aya] Sarata.

4) Headquarters 12 A, leaving the task force in Chernivtsi, go to Kolomyia.

5) To explain to all personnel that our Government allowed the Romanian army to carry out the evacuation until 14.00 on 3.7.40, therefore, all issues should be resolved only peacefully, allowing where necessary the possibility of a normal withdrawal. During the withdrawal of the Romanian units, to prevent the production of robberies by the Romanian soldiers, the removal of livestock, rolling stock and supplies taken from the local population of Bessarabia and Bukovina, for which purpose allocate for crossings across the river. Prut: from the 5th Army near Braneshta, a tank battalion with an infantry landing from 36 brigade; from the 9th Army in Leuseni a tank battalion with a landing party; in Cahul one tank regiment from cd, in Reni a tank battalion with an infantry landing; to cross the river Danube to Izmail - one tank regiment from cd.

The tank regiments and battalions should set out for the indicated crossings at 5.00 on 30.6.40, the tasks are to control the withdrawal of the Romanian troops across the border and in no way allow the export of property, the removal of livestock, carts taken from the local population and rolling stock "953 .

On June 30, on the front of the 12th Army, the troops of the 4th and 2nd Cavalry Corps, the battalion of the 24th, 23rd and 5th Tank Brigades were in their former areas and were preparing to move to Storozhinets and Stavchany after their replacement by rifle units. The 60th Rifle Division at 1600 reached Storozhinets with the main forces, and the forward detachments of the 358th and 194th Rifle Regiments went to the Porubnoe-Gertz line to change cavalry. One unit of the Red Army accidentally entered the Siret station, but on the same day retreated beyond the established line of the state border. The 58th Rifle Division occupied the area of Dinovtsy, Kotelevo and was preparing to change units of the 5th Tank Brigade. The 131st Rifle Division was completely concentrated in Chernivtsi.

On the front of the 5th Army, the 49th Tank Brigade was relieved by the approaching regiments of the 80th Infantry Division, which deployed along the Shirovtsy-Korzheutsy-Kukonesti line and concentrated in Korzheutsy. One tank battalion of the brigade was advanced to the crossing near Branesht, where it remained until the units of the 169th Infantry Division approached. The 169th Rifle Division replaced the 36th Tank Brigade, which withdrew to the Onesht region, and occupied the Proskuryany, Braneshty, Bolotino, Kamenka, Balti, and Ryshkany regions. Parts of the 8th and 11th cavalry regiments of the 4th Romanian cavalry division departed through Braneshty, who robbed the population. The commander of the 1st battalion of the 556th rifle regiment of the 169th rifle division offered to hand over the horses and wagons stolen from the population. The Romanians refused, firing several rifle and machine gun shots at the battalion's disposition. The battalion turned around and, in turn, fired several shots towards the Romanians, who fled, leaving their horses, part of their weapons and wagons. The Bessarabian cavalry remained on the eastern bank of the Prut. Horses and wagons stolen from local residents were seized from the remnants of the cavalry. The artillery battalion of the 4th Romanian Cavalry Division, which was retreating in the division's zone, disarmed itself and refused to leave for Romania. The 140th Rifle Division reached the area of Falesti, Skumpia, and the advance detachment advanced to the Prut between Toksoben and Skulyan. During the day, the 3rd assault and 92nd fighter air regiments moved to the Balti area.

On the front of the 9th Army, the main forces of the 15th Motorized Rifle Division were in the Pyrlitsa area from 15:00. The battalion of the 321st motorized regiment and the tank battalion of the 14th tank regiment controlled the crossing in Ungheni from 20:00. The advanced tank company at 20.00 occupied the crossing at Petresht. The 47th Rifle Regiment at 1400 came into contact with a Romanian detachment of up to 1,800 men with 20 guns and 200 carts loaded with artillery shells. They were asked to reload the shells on military carts, and to return the carts of local residents. The tank battalion and the 9th rifle company of the 15th motorized rifle division entered Skulyany. During negotiations with the Romanian general, which took place on the street with a large crowd of local residents, it was not known who threw a hand grenade towards the Soviet tanks, after the explosion of which a machine-gun burst was fired at the tank by the Romanian units. One of the tanks answered

machine-gun fire and a fragmentation projectile. There were no casualties on either side. On the night of July 1, as a result of indiscriminate firing from the Romanian bank of the Prut, a Red Army soldier of the 9th rifle company of the 15th motorized rifle division was wounded. In response to the Soviet protest, the Romanian side stated that it was the soldiers who were cleaning their weapons and fired shots out of carelessness. Soviet fighters witnessed how a Bessarabian soldier was stabbed with bayonets on the western bank of the Prut, where the Romanian troops were preparing defensive positions. At 12.50, a

Romanian general arrived at the location of the 95th Infantry Division with two officers and an interpreter and protested the rapid advance of the Soviet troops, which was bringing disorder to the Romanian army. The general threatened that he had given his units the order to open fire if the Soviet units began to advance behind them to the Balchan-Karlikan line. However, this did not prevent the 95th Infantry Division from entering Gancheshty with the main forces by the end of the day, and the advance detachment in vehicles reached the banks of the Prut and occupied Leovo at 17 o'clock, and Leuseni at 20 o'clock. The main forces of the 5th Cavalry Corps occupied the Romanovo-Cimislia region by 1500 hours. In front of the front of the corps, the 12th Romanian infantry division, staffed by Bessarabians, who refused to leave for Romania, retreated. "Soldiers of the 22nd and 3rd artillery regiments in the Petrovka area abandoned their materiel, personal weapons and went home." About 3,000 Bessarabian servicemen of the 10th and 20th infantry regiments of the division voluntarily laid down their arms and were sent home, while 80 officers and 200 non-commissioned officers were detained.

To the south, the 74th Rifle Division occupied Akkerman with its 78th Rifle Regiment, and with the rest of its forces entered Staraya Sarata at 0300. 22 Romanian soldiers and 1 officer came to the division headquarters and voluntarily surrendered their weapons. The 25th Rifle Division reached the area of Tatarbunary, Akmangit. When approaching Akmangit, an explosion of a mine laid by the Romanians killed 1 and wounded 3 servicemen of the 263rd Infantry Regiment. At 13:00, the 80th separate reconnaissance battalion and the forward detachment of the division, consisting of 2 rifle companies, set out in vehicles in the direction of Reni and Izmail. During the day, the 4th Fighter Aviation Regiment moved to Chisinau, and the 2 squadrons of the 67th Fighter Aviation Regiment moved to Akkerman.

Landing operations continued in the south of Bessarabia. On the night of June 30, the 4th company of the 204th airborne brigade occupied Reni in vehicles, where it was met by "random fire from the Romanians fleeing in the dark." After return fire, "the firefight stopped, there were no casualties on our side." On the morning of June 30, the 5th company of the 2nd battalion of the brigade, on the way to Reni, was fired upon by a Romanian aircraft, as a result of which 1 fighter was wounded. In the meantime, at 02:00 on June 30, the 1st Battalion of the 204th Airborne Brigade set out on a campaign to occupy Cahul. In the area of Bolgrad, Bolgariysk and the Troyanov Val station, the 3rd battalion of the brigade was left, which was also engaged in the collection of parachutes. During the day, in the Bolgrad area, units of the 28th Infantry Regiment of the 12th Infantry Division, the 4th Cavalry Regiment of the 3rd Cavalry Division and the 6th Gendarme Regiment, which retreated to Romania, disarmed by 50–70% and went home.

In the meantime, at 4.55 am on June 30, an order was given by the commander of the Air Force of the Southern Front to transfer the 201st airborne brigade to Izmail, and at 9.35–12.15 44 TB-3 aircraft with 809 paratroopers on board headed for the target. At 14.31, the last 5 aircraft took off from the airfield in Skomorokha. Initially, it was assumed that the aircraft would land at the Izmail airfield, but it turned out that the airfield was too small for such large aircraft. Landing began at about 12.20, and out of the first 9 aircraft that landed, 3 suffered breakdowns, including one of them collided with an I-16 aircraft that was on the ground, which burned down. After landing another 4 TB-3, it was decided to stop landing and drop paratroopers 1 km north of the city. Since there was no connection between the ground and the planes, 6 cars flew away and landed in Bolgrad. In total, 240 were landed and 509 people were parachuted, and out of three aircraft, landing was not carried out, since one contained radio equipment that was not prepared for landing, the other had a brigade orchestra, which consisted of fighters unprepared for jumping who refused to jump, and the third plane fell behind on the way. As a result, all three aircraft returned to Boryspil. During the landing, 10 paratroopers were injured and 1 broke his leg. By 18 o'clock Izmail was busy, and by 21 o'clock the paratroopers organized the protection of the border along the Danube from

Satu-Nou to Staraya Nekrasovka. The Romanian troops and their property were no longer in the city. By 10 pm, the advance detachment of the 25th Infantry Division and the squadron of the 18th Tank Regiment of the 32nd Cavalry Division of the 5th Cavalry Corps approached the city, which were used to strengthen the protection of the city and the border. "The presence of these tanks in the airfield area, obviously, was the result of interpretations about the transfer of tanks by aircraft," explained the commander of the 201st brigade, Major General I.S. Angleless. Late in the evening, representatives of the Odessa Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks arrived in the city and set about organizing local city government. In the meantime, it turned out that in Izmail, during the withdrawal of the Romanian troops, 6 citizens were killed, who were trying to resist the sacking of the city. Their funeral resulted in a crowded demonstration⁹⁵⁴.

According to the command of the Southern Front, the landings "completely justified themselves and forced the Romanian units to reckon with the agreement"⁹⁵⁵. Despite such a high assessment of the actions of the paratroopers, the commanders of the airborne brigades were quite critical of the operation. In their opinion, the air force command did not actually prepare the operation: no reconnaissance of the drop site was carried out, there was no organization of communications, and the preparation of air regiments for landing turned out to be low, which led to the dispersion of the landing force of the 204th brigade over a large area (8 km along the combat course and up to 3–4 km to the sides). In addition, there was no unified command and control of the landing force, and "in a real combat situation, this

would result in large unnecessary losses .

Head of the Combat Training Directorate of the Red Army, Lieutenant General V.N. Kurdyumov, reporting on July 24, 1940 to the People's Commissar of Defense on the progress of the airborne operation in Bessarabia, noted that it was "executed exceptionally badly", since "there was no any preparation for the operation ... The release of the 204th brigade on June 29 was carried out with a delay of 1 hour 30 minutes due to untimely issuance of the departure order. The departure of the 201st brigade instead of 9.00 was made at 14.00 on June 30 for the same reason, and also because of the lack of fuel tankers at the Skomorokha airfield. The airborne assault was carried out in a peaceful manner - without the cover of combat aircraft and preliminary reconnaissance of the area of the drop (landing). The formations and flight altitude were not respected. The release was carried out in a disorganized manner, at various heights and very extended. As a result, the brigades were dispersed over an area of 10 x 10 km, and after landing they were assembled within two hours, which is unacceptable for a combat situation. The landing flight took place during the day, in conditions of the greatest turbulence in the air, from here only in one 204th brigade 50 people were returned to the departure airfields, who were unable to jump (sickness). The air brigades were thrown out and landed without any tasks and instructions on the nature of the actions. The drop points for the command of the airborne brigades became known only from the commanders of the flying units. There was no leadership of the brigades from the side of the front, and only 5 hours after the drop, a representative of the front arrived in the 204th brigade with a very general order to occupy new points, but again without mentioning the nature of the actions of the brigades.

When using brigades, the degree of their condition and preparedness was not taken into account. Thus, the 204th brigade, which had 42.2% of the "composition of people who arrived at the brigade in June and hastily made 1-3 jumps, was dropped by parachute in difficult conditions with a wind of 8-9 m / s. At the same time, the 214th brigade, best prepared for the parachute drop, was not used at all. The time to prepare for the operation from the moment the order was received to the departure was estimated at 4 hours, and then due to the deprivation of the necessary rest of the brigade personnel. Replenishment of the abandoned brigades with firearms and food by air, as well as the evacuation of the wounded and sick, was not provided. After many requests, only on July 5 (five days later) an ambulance aircraft arrived at the location of the 204th brigade. The listed shortcomings in a combat situation would inevitably lead to the failure of the airborne operation and to the needless loss of people and aircraft .

Meanwhile, on July 1, on the front of the 12th Army, the 192nd Mountain Rifle Division concentrated its main forces in the area of Stebne, Ust-Putila. By 6 o'clock in the morning, the passes north of Frasin and Straga were occupied by outposts. The 56th Romanian Infantry Regiment and two squadrons of cavalry retreated in front of the division's front, with which 15 guns were thrown in the Dikhtinets area. The 60th Rifle Division replaced the cavalry during the day in the Porubnoye-Gertsia sector. On the Novoselitsa-Lipkany sector, the 58th Infantry Division replaced the 3rd Cavalry Division and the 5th Tank Brigade, which withdrew to Stavchany. The 34th Cavalry Division and the 23rd Tank Brigade concentrated in Storozhinets, and the 2nd Cavalry Corps in Khotyn.

On the front of the 5th Army, Soviet troops occupied their former position. Only the 3rd battalion of the 680th rifle regiment of the 169th rifle division occupied Kukhneshty, and the 140th rifle division continued to move towards the Prut. The advanced battalion of the 798th rifle regiment of the division entered Skulyany, where the battalion commander, Major Chernov, not knowing about the permission to postpone the withdrawal of the Romanian troops until July 3, negotiated with the Romanian command to clear the coast from the Romanian soldiers. Chernov gave 1 hour to fulfill his demands - until 24.00. The representative of the Romanian side, Divisional General Pavniceanu, refused, threatening to use force in case of a provocation. Meanwhile, Chernov was informed about the extension of the evacuation period, and he withdrew his demands. The 49th tank brigade concentrated in Larga, and the 36th tank brigade in Oneshty, sending one battalion to Braneshty.

On the front of the 9th Army, the 15th Motorized Rifle Division occupied the area of Petreshty, Ungheni, and Pyrlitsa. On the night of July 1, a group of Red Army soldiers in vehicles was fired at in the Strashen area. At the same time, on the southwestern outskirts of Pyrlitsa, a team of telephone operators of the 53rd separate communications battalion, consisting of 1 junior commander and 4 Red Army soldiers, was attacked by unknown people. 1 Red Army soldier was killed, and the rest fought for 3 hours. With the approach of Soviet tanks, the attackers disappeared into the darkness. The 95th Rifle Division approached the Karpineny in the evening. By the end of the day, the main forces of the 25th Infantry Division entered Kamenskoye, and its advanced units entered Reni and Izmail as early

as 8 o'clock in the morning. Meanwhile, at 8 pm on June 30, the headquarters of the 204th airborne brigade received a report from the commander of the 1st battalion, which was located 20 km southeast of Cahul, that, according to information received from the local population, the Romanian units had organized a defense in 2 km east of the city. The brigade commander Gubarevich with the 8th company of the 3rd battalion in 3 vehicles at 1.00 on July 1 left for Cahul. Arriving at the location of the 1st battalion, the brigade commander learned that the battalion commander was negotiating with the Romanian officer, who was the most senior in the area, who was dragging out the negotiations, waiting for the cavalry regiment to approach. "For the provocative organization of the defense," Gubarevich later reported, "I gave the retreat of the defending units a period of 20 minutes, which they overfulfilled, without waiting for the order of my officer. Entering the city, I called the head of the garrison with the rank of major and suggested that he talk with his command about the cleansing of Cahul in connection with the provocative organization of defense on the outskirts of Cahul. Upon my return from the border dam across the Prut River, there were no Romanians in the city, and the major reported that the requirement had been met." The appearance of p

Romanian soldiers. By 0200, the 30th Tank Regiment of the 9th Cavalry Division entered the city.

In Reni, the departing Romanian units were inspected by the fighters of the 2nd battalion of the 204th airborne brigade and local residents flocking from everywhere. The property of the Bessarabian population and livestock were immediately confiscated and returned to their owners. The rail transport was checked in the same way. It is clear that these measures of the Soviet troops caused dissatisfaction with the Romanian units, which, having crossed to the western bank of the Prut, often opened indiscriminate fire in the direction of the location of the paratroopers. During the day, in spontaneous skirmishes, 1 Red Army soldier was wounded and 1 Romanian soldier was killed. On the night of July 2, near Giurgiulesht, from the Romanian coast, the positions of the 2nd battalion of the 204th brigade were shelled for 30 minutes, which did not return fire. The Soviet parliamentarians offered the Romanian command a ceasefire⁹⁵⁸. In the meantime, the Udarny and Rostovtsev river monitors left Ochakov for Odessa,

which were supposed to move further to Izmail through the Ochakov arm of the Danube. To prepare the fairway, 2 hydrographic vessels, boats and the Khenkin minesweeper were sent to the mouth. In the bay of Zhebriany, the gunboat "Red Georgia" and the minesweeper "Explosion" anchored. As naval intelligence reported, during the day, on the approach to Sulina, the Romanian fleet set up a minefield, and the destroyer "Meresti" with 1 gunboat is on patrol between Sulina and about. On July 2, at the front of the 12th and 5th armies, the troops remained in the areas reached the day before. In the area of Kamenka across the river. Siret, up to 400 soldiers from the 7th and 8th⁹⁵⁹.

Romanian infantry divisions that had already retreated beyond the border line, crossed into Soviet territory. The 140th Infantry Division, which concentrated its main forces in the area of Falesti, Scumpia, deployed outposts along the Prut from Kalinesht to Skulyan, where up to 100 remaining Romanian soldiers and 6 Cardin-Lloyd tankettes were found in the barracks.

On the front of the 9th Army, the 15th Motorized Rifle Division continued to remain in the area of Pyrlitsa, Korneshty. The forward detachment of the division controlled the crossing in Ungheni, where the Romanian units mined the bridge. Having received an order to prevent the explosion of the bridge, the division commander presented an ultimatum to the Romanian command: "In the event of a bridge explosion, we will take decisive action with the use of aviation against Iasi." As a result, the Romanian side agreed with the Soviet demands, and the bridge was not blown up. In addition to the evacuated Romanian troops, up to 6 thousand refugees accumulated at the crossing to Romania. The main forces of the 95th Infantry Division were concentrated in the Karpinen area by 5 o'clock, and the forward detachment controlled the Prut bank from Leuseni to Leovo. The 136th Cavalry Regiment of the 9th Cavalry Division at 0900 set out from Cimisia to the crossing at Falchiu. On the night of July 2, in the area of picket No. 4 near the Dniester Estuary, unknown persons fired on a column of the 360th Infantry Regiment of the 74th Infantry Division. After return fire, the shooting, as a result of which 2 horses were wounded, stopped. The main forces of the 25th Infantry Division reached the area of Banovka, Novo-Pokrovka. On July 1 and 2, separate Romanian planes bombarded the square and the railway station in Reni, but there were

no casualties. 1.5 km east of Giurgiulesht, the Romanian company took up defensive positions and opened indiscriminate machine-gun fire on the soldiers of the 204th airborne brigade. At the suggestion of the brigade commander, the Romanian units were withdrawn beyond the Prut. At 18.30-19.00 on July 2, 5-6 Romanian river monitors, cruising between Galati and Giurgiulesti, fired indirect fire from their 37-mm guns, and the last Romanian units retreated along the bridges to the western bank of the river. Rod. Soviet troops, who were 250 meters from the bridges, did not open fire. After the departure of the last Romanian units at 19.45, in a conversation with the Soviet representatives on the bridge, the Romanian parliamentarian Colonel Stepanov warned them to immediately leave the bridge. 2-3 minutes after their departure, two trusses of the western part of the railway bridge and two spans of the automobile bridge were blown up. In response to the protest of the Soviet side, the Romanian representatives stated that the bridges had been blown up because the Soviet tanks had attacked them.

Meanwhile, in the arms of the Danube, Soviet ships were measuring depths. The river monitors of the Danube military flotilla "Rostovtsev", "Shock", "Martynov", "Zheleznyakov" and "Pearls" were in Odessa, waiting for the weather to improve for the transition to Izmail. The Romanian command declared the mined zones near Sulina and Constanta dangerous for navigation. True, in reality, mining was not carried out near Constanta⁹⁶⁰.

On the same day, by its order No. 017 / ss, the headquarters of the Southern Front demanded that the headquarters of the 12th, 5th and 9th armies organize the defense of the border and "develop a plan for the use of troops in case Romania switches to active operations. In this plan, to provide for the use of units not only already advanced to the border, but also those that remained behind the river. Dniester and Cheremosh. Submit this plan for approval by 20.00 4.7.40. Open by observation, without crossing the river. Prut, the position of the Romanian army (intentions, whether it crossed the western bank of the Prut river to the defense, whether it retreats further, its main groupings, whether the strengthening of the western bank of the Prut river continues). Determine which groups of the Romanian army are still hanging out in the rear of the army, their behavior and measures for their withdrawal from the river. Prut"⁹⁶¹.

On July 3, on the front of the 12th Army at 15:00, the 77th Romanian Infantry Regiment advanced in battle order in the direction of Volchinets, violating the state border in the Vashkouts area with forward units. The population in a panic, with cattle, fled to Volchinets. The outpost of the 148th cavalry regiment, consisting of a junior lieutenant and 6 fighters, was forced to withdraw. With the arrival of a tank company of the 23rd tank brigade, the Romanian unit withdrew beyond the border line in the direction of Siret. Although the sides of fire were not opened, the tank company, just in case, was left in

Washcouce.

On the front of the 9th Army, the forward detachment of the 15th Motorized Rifle Division was withdrawn from Skulyan, since the main forces of the 798th Rifle Regiment of the 140th Rifle Division approached there. The 25th Rifle Division entered the Kubey region (now Chervonoarmeiskoye) and continued to move towards Bolgrad. The 32nd cavalry division occupied Abaklia, and the 18th tank regiment of the division was stationed in squadrons in Bolgrad, Reni and Izmail. By 4 p.m., the 136th cavalry regiment with a field artillery battery of the 108th cavalry regiment of the 9th cavalry division arrived in Kania, where the 46th tank battalion of the 4th tank brigade, which was located there, was reassigned to it. After the withdrawal of the last Romanian units behind the Prut, the Romanians made the railway bridge impassable and mined the bridge for wheeled vehicles near Falcui. By the end of the day, squadrons of the 136th Cavalry Regiment were deployed along the Prut from Leovo to Kania, south of Gatesht to Cahul, squadrons of the 86th Cavalry Regiment of the 32nd Cavalry Division

deployed along the river. The improvement of the weather and the completion of priority hydrographic work in the Danube arms allowed 5 river monitors of the Danube military flotilla, accompanied by the destroyer "Bodry", to begin the transition from Odessa to Izmail⁹⁶².

From 14.00 on July 3, 1940, the Soviet-Romanian border was closed. Thus, "the troops of the Southern Front fulfilled the task assigned to them and provided our Government with the opportunity to peacefully liberate BESSARABIA and BUKOVINA and, by their actions, quickly secured them for the USSR. ...The border is securely secured. The main forces began normal combat training in the areas they occupied. Following the troops of the Red Army, 3 operational-Chekist groups of the NKVD were introduced into the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, which arrested former employees of the Romanian punitive organs, agents of the Romanian special services and seized weapons from the population. By July 3, 490 people were arrested, and in the adjacent regions of the Ukrainian SSR - 270 agents of the Romanian intelligence⁹⁶⁴. On the same day, the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR sent a letter to the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs with a proposal "on the urgent advancement of the border troops of the NKVD to the line of the new state border of the USSR with Romania and on the change of field units of the Red Army"⁹⁶⁵. Table 8 **Grouping of troops of the Southern Front on July 3,**

1940966

Армии	Корпуса	Дивизии, бригады
		8-я, 17-я, 86-я СД, 214-я адбр
12-я	13-й СК	62-я, 139-я СД
	8-й СК	72-я, 124-я, 146-я СД, 10-я, 24-я, 26-я тбр
	15-й СК	7-я, 141-я** СД, 81-я МСД, 38-я тбр
	2-й* КК	3-я*, 5-я* КД
	17-й* СК	58-я*, 60-я*, 131-я* СД, 5-я* тбр
	4-й* КК	16-я*, 34-я* КД, 23-я* тбр
		192-я* ГСД
5-я	49-й СК	44-я, 135-я** СД
	36-й* СК	80-я*, 169-я*, 140-я* СД, 36-я*, 49-я* тбр
		130-я** СД
9-я	37-й СК	30-я, 147-я, 176-я СД, 21-я тбр
	7-й СК	51-я**, 150-я, 164-я СД, 14-я тбр
	35-й* СК	15-я* МСД, 95-я*, 173-я* СД, 4-я* тбр
	5-й* КК	9-я*, 32-я* КД
	55-й* СК	25-я*, 74-я* СД
		201-я*, 204-я* адбр, 100-я, 116-я СД

* Troops introduced into the territory of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia.

** Troops from which separate units were introduced into the territory of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia divisions.

At 22.30 on July 3, the chief of staff of the Southern Front issued order No. 024 / ss:

"In connection with the end of the evacuation period for the Romanian army, the commander of the front ordered: 1. Firmly gain a foothold on the new state border, immediately close it and prevent crossing the state border. 2. Disarm the remaining small units and groups of Romanian troops and collect them in camps under guard until special orders. The

gathering place is determined by the commanders of formations and separate units. 3. To each army, immediately allocate units and units, with a total strength of at least an infantry division with vehicles, to collect abandoned Romanian weapons, military equipment and other property, to comb the area and capture still hiding small groups of Romanian soldiers and, possibly, bandit groups. In the garrisons and in the areas of

garrisons, this task should be entrusted to the heads of the garrisons, and near the state border to troops occupying it.

Involve the local population in this work. The

collected weapons and property should be immediately taken into account and handed over under reliable protection to the point established by formation commanders.

4. Within five days, register the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Romanian army remaining on the territory of Bessarabia and Bukovina, indicating the last name, first name and patronymic, rank and position, place of residence, which unit and in which garrison he served, nationality, what locality he was born in, year of birth, place of residence and occupation of the family.

5. Establish careful monitoring of all crossings across the river. The rod and prevent them from blowing, making strict demands on the Romanian command in this regard.

Consider that the Romanian troops have already blown up the railway and dirt bridges across the river. Rod at Reni; the bridges near Ungeni-Tyrg were prepared for the explosion, but as a result of the tough ultimatum presented by us, the bridges near Ungeni-Tyrg were not blown up.

6. Execution and on the measures taken, indicating which parts are allocated for the collection of weapons, which bridges are taken under supervision and other measures, to be reported by

18.00 4.7.40. 7. At the new state border, establish careful monitoring of the opposite bank, behavior and actions of the Romanian troops"967 . At

2.10 on July 4, Shaposhnikov informed the command of the Southern Front the order of the People's Commissar of Defense: "1. The border with Romania in northern Bukovina and Bessarabia up to and including the mouth of the Danube must be firmly closed and don't miss anyone.

2. Disarm all remaining units and subunits of the Romanian army urgently and immediately. 3. Report by special telegram how many Romanian soldiers, officers and non-commissioned officers have been disarmed since the beginning of the operation until 03.07 inclusive."968 As was reported to Moscow, 7,446 servicemen of the Romanian army (106 officers, 243 non-commissioned officers and 7,097 soldiers) remained on Soviet territory and were disarmed .

At about 2 am on July 4, in the sector of the 5th army in the Valya Rusului area, the commander of the 6th company of the 445th rifle regiment of the 140th rifle division sent the squad leader Vekshin with 3 fighters behind the company. Approaching the river, Vekshin mistook his company for the Romanians and opened fire. As a result, 3 Red Army soldiers were wounded, 1 of whom died from wounds. On the front of the 9th Army, at 2 pm on the same day, the main forces of the 25th Infantry Division entered Bolgrad, Reni and Izmail, and from July 6 changed tank and airborne units on the border guard. At 4 pm on July 4, the river monitors of the Danube military flotilla entered the Ochakovskaya arm of the Danube and moved up the river following the boats trawling the fairway. 3 border boats arrived in Vilkovo, 3 more boats went up the river to Kiliya970. On the same day, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks approved the proposal of the People's Commissar of Defense for the rebuilding of about 1,300 km of railways in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina by the end of July and the restoration of bridges across the Dniester971 .

At 5.45 on July 5, in the 14th Infantry Regiment of the 72nd Infantry Division of the 12th Army, a sentry guarding an impromptu warehouse under a canopy took a fuse from an unsealed box and began to turn it in his hands. The fuse ignited, and the sentry, frightened, threw it back into the box where the rest of the fuses lay, which led to an explosion, as a result of which 8 people were injured. On the same night, near Branesh, unknown persons attacked the communications post of the 556th Infantry Regiment of the 169th Infantry Division. In the skirmish, 1 Red Army soldier was killed, and the attackers fled in the dark. On this day, 5 monitors of the Danube military flotilla arrived in Kiliya at 14.20, and in Izmail at 20.30. Trawling of the fairway showed that the approaches to the port of Izmail were blocked by flooded booms. To control the Danube at 8 pm on July 5, the 265th corps artillery regiment of the 7th rifle corps arrived in Izmail, and the 441st corps artillery regiment of the 37th rifle corps arrived in Kiliya . In connection with the end of the Bessarabian campaign on July 5, the troops of the Southern Front, and

on July 6, the Black Sea Fleet were brought to a state of normal peacetime readiness973. In small skirmishes with the Romanian troops and from accidents, units of the Red Army and border troops from June 11 to July 6, 1940 lost, according to incomplete data, 148 people (killed - 6, died - 26, suicides - 10, drowned - 23, wounded - 79, self-mutilation - 4)974. According to some reports, the losses of the Romanian troops amounted to 89 people (killed - 42, wounded - 47)975. On the morning of July 5, border detachments crossed the Dniester and moved in motor vehicles to the Prut. From 21.00 on July 8, the border was transferred to the protection of the border troops of the NKVD. On the new border and along the Prut and Danube rivers, the 97th (Chernovitsky), 23rd (Lipkansky), 24th (Balti), 2nd (Calarashsky), 25th (Cahulsky) and 79th (Izmail) border detachments of the Ukrainian and Moldavian districts of the border troops of the NKVD976 . Meanwhile, according to the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR No. 1193 - 464ss of July 6, the territory of Northern Bukovina was included in the KOVO, and

Bessarabia - in the OdVO, and a number of organizational measures were envisaged in the Red Army977. On the same day, the People's Commissar of Defense, by his directives, brought to the attention of the Military Councils of the KOVO and the OdVO the composition and deployment of the troops of the districts. It was necessary to start new formations approved by the government, to transfer troops to places of permanent deployment, to disband the units and institutions created for the Bessarabian campaign, and to begin the dismissal of the detained recruits978. On the basis of the directive of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 0/1/104584, the commander of the Southern Front issued on July 7 directives No. 050-052, according to which it was required to temporarily leave the 192nd mountain rifle, 58th, 60th and 169th -th rifle divisions, and "send the rest of the formations, units and institutions to the points of permanent deployment"979. For permanent deployment in Bessarabia, the 176th Infantry Division remained in the area of Soroca, Floreshty, Balti, 15th

motorized rifle division in the Bendery region, Tiraspol, 9th cavalry division in the Leovo region, Comrat, 25th rifle division in the Cahul region, Bolgrad, 51st rifle division in the Kiliya region, Staraya Sarata, Akkerman and departments of the 14th and 35th rifle corps, respectively, in Bolgrad and Chisinau⁹⁸⁰. From July 8–9, the troops of the Southern Front set out on a campaign to their places of permanent deployment.

At the same time, the dispersal of aviation units began. On July 8, the Chief of the General Staff ordered the Commander of the KOVO to redeploy the 33rd Fighter and 3rd Heavy Bomber Aviation Regiments to the BOVO, the 16th Aviation Brigade, the 13th High-Speed Bomber and 51st Long-Range Bomber Aviation Regiments to the OrVO, and the 60th High-Speed Bomber Aviation Regiment to the KhVO. In the KalVO the 16th high-speed bomber aviation regiment, in the LVO the control of the 29th air brigade and the 7th heavy bomber air regiment, in the North Caucasus Military District the 1st long-range bomber air regiment and to return to the places of permanent deployment in the OdVO the control of the 7th air brigade, the 8th and 11th and heavy bomber regiments. At the same time, the commander of the OdVO was ordered to send the command of the 55th air brigade, the 44th and 58th high-speed bomber air regiments to the LVO, and also to transfer the 21st long-range bomber, 146th and 131st fighter air regiments to the places of permanent deployment⁹⁸¹. Already on July 9, 13 air regiments were deployed to the places of permanent deployment (33rd IAP and 3rd bap in BOVO, 13th bap and 51st bap in OrVO, 60th bap in KhVO, 21st bap, 8th and 11th bap in the OdVO, 7th bap, 44th and 58th bap in the LVO, 16th bap in the KalVO, 1st bap in the North Caucasus Military District), consisting of 540 aircraft⁹⁸². On July 9, the administration of the Southern Front was disbanded, and on July 10, the administration of the 9th Army⁹⁸³.

Soviet-Romanian commissions

in accordance with the Soviet-Romanian agreement of June 28, 1940, the deputy commander of the OdVO troops, General - Lieutenant D.T. Kozlov, who was ordered by the Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army at 11:17 p.m. to organize a meeting on June 29 of Romanian representatives sailing from Constanta on the steamer Transylvania, led by Division General A. Aldea⁹⁸⁴.

At 17.30 on June 29, Davidescu arrived at Molotov and handed over to him the plan for the evacuation of certain zones of the transferred territories, developed by the Romanian General Staff, as well as the request of the Romanian government that the rate of occupation of the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina by Soviet troops should not exceed the rate of evacuation of the Romanian troops. Molotov replied that "the rate of evacuation should be set by the Mixed Commission, which can now begin work. However, it is not known for what reasons the Romanian delegates have not yet arrived in Odessa. As for the opinion of the government of the USSR on the evacuation period, it agrees to extend the period until 2 p.m. (Moscow time) on July 3, so that the Romanian government has 5 days at its disposal. Accordingly, the rate of advance of the Soviet troops will also be calculated. Davidescu replied that "he does not know for what reasons the Romanian delegates have not yet arrived in Odessa. They left Constanta yesterday on the ship Transylvania, and it is possible that the ship was delayed due to a storm in the Black Sea.

At the same time, the Romanian side tried to achieve a revision of the border line in Northern Bukovina. Davidescu told Molotov that since the new dividing line in the Hertsa region was not exactly fixed, he "did not quite clearly inform his government about it. When he looked at the map shown to him by Comrade Molotov, then it was not clear to him whether this line went north of Hertz or in another direction. At present, the Soviet units have reached Hertz and have advanced 11 km south of this city. The Romanian government asks to leave this region behind Romania, since it is an old Romanian territory that belonged to Romania even before the war of 1914. Therefore, the Romanian side proposed to draw the border along the line of the former border between Austria-Hungary and Romania. Molotov reminded "the envoy that during a conversation on June 26 he suggested that he take a map showing the proposed border, but the envoy refused the map and limited himself to recording the most important border points. The map was published today in the papers. The envoy can receive this card even now." With regard to Bucharest's request to change the border line, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR said that "he foresees difficulties in resolving this issue in the direction desired by the Romanian government"⁹⁸⁵. Nevertheless, the Soviet leadership decided to consult with the military, and on June 30, the General Staff asked

Vatutin, Chief of Staff of the Southern Front, to report before 14:00 "an assessment of the significance of the Hertz region both militarily and economically"⁹⁸⁶. In response, Vatutin said that "in economic terms, Hertz is of no particular importance. In military terms, the Hertz region, with its location on the southern bank of the river. Prut occupies a commanding position above the Novoselitsa area (railway station), is a road junction and a fortified point. Therefore, it is necessary to have the Hertz region in our hands." On July 1, the chief of the General Staff transmitted this response to the NKID⁹⁸⁷. On the same day, Davidescu handed over a note to Molotov, in which he indicated that in his note the USSR demanded the northern part of Bukovina, "however, the line drawn in red pencil cuts off a corner of the territory in the Hertz region, which never formed part of either Bukovina or Bessarabia, but was part of the old kingdom - Dorohoi County. The old border between Romania and Austria-Hungary was at Mamornica. There was not and is not a single Ukrainian in this area.

Consequently, occupying the line indicated on the map, the Government of the USSR would put

practically a new demand, since we are talking about a territory that has always belonged to Romania and has never been part of either Bessarabia or Bukovina. This note contains Molotov's resolution: "T. Sobolev. It must be answered that this has no basis, because. The Romanian government accepted the proposals of the USSR, to which a map was attached, according to which the Hertsa region is part of the USSR"988. At 9 pm on July 4, the Romanian side was told that "the demand of the Romanian authorities regarding the border in the area of the city of Hertsa, being in complete contradiction with the border marked [in accordance with the map attached to the proposals of the Soviet government of June 26 this year] , not accepted by the competent Soviet authorities"989 .

In the meantime, at 21.10 on June 29, Zhukov reported by telephone to VCh Shaposhnikov that, according to Timoshenko, the Romanian troops were robbing the population and stealing livestock. According to the people's commissar of defense, "it is necessary to raise a question with the government of Romania - to immediately return the cattle, carts and the male population - natives of Bessarabia, which today serves in the entire Romanian army"990. At 22.10 on June 29, a Romanian delegation arrived in Odessa, and at 24.00 the first meeting of the Mixed Commission opened. At it, the Romanian representatives proposed to introduce planning into the withdrawal of the Romanian and the advance of the Soviet troops and to ensure that there was a gap of one day's march between the two armies. In addition, they asked that Soviet units be withdrawn from Hertsa and that Romanian citizens wishing to evacuate be allowed to leave for the Prut. The Soviet representatives pointed out that the delay in the arrival of the Romanian delegates led to the fact that it would not be possible to immediately introduce planning into the advance of the troops, and demanded an end to the outrages perpetrated by the retreating Romanian troops.

At 2 pm on June 30, Timoshenko, who was in Bessarabia, reported to the General Staff about a number of facts indicating that the Romanian side was violating the terms of the Soviet-Romanian agreement of June 28. Thus, the bridges in Balti, Kroschkautsi and Nedoboutsy were blown up, near the village of Old Bedratsy, the Romanian units threatened to open fire if the Soviet troops prevented them from taking carts from the population. When the Soviet units entered Balti, the Romanian cavalrymen opened fire on them. During the crossing of the Soviet units across the Dniester near Kossovo, the Romanian units fired two bursts of machine guns in their direction. On the Chisinau-Pyrlitsa road, a column of the Red Army was fired from a machine gun and tanks, as a result of which 2 Red Army soldiers were killed. On the Snyatyn-Chernovitsy road, the Romanian cavalry opened fire on the Soviet units991. On the same day, Shaposhnikov, in a report addressed to Stalin and Molotov, reported that, according to the People's Commissar of Defense and the command of the Southern Front, "Romanian troops rob the population, take away horses, wagons and take them away, steal cattle, take away men capable of carrying weapons. In the city of Balti, the departing units of the Romanian army blew up a bridge (the 4th Romanian cavalry division retreated through the city of Balti). To the south of Zalishchyky, the Romanians set fire to the building of the frontier outpost. In Akkerman, at the entrance of our units, the hangar was on fire. The People's Commissar of Defense asks that the question of the return of those liable for military service, natives of Bessarabia from the entire Romanian army, be raised before the Romanian government .

On June 30, the Romanian envoy in Moscow conveyed to the USSR People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs a protest against the fact that in some places "Soviet mechanized units reached their final goal already during" June 29. The Soviet side, in turn, asked to take "all measures so that the population was not forced to leave the territory along with the troops being withdrawn" and to stop "cases when the troops being withdrawn take carts, cattle and various household items by force of arms." In addition, Moscow demanded "to take measures to make possible the return to Bessarabia of all soldiers, natives of Bessarabia, who wish this."993 Meanwhile, during the second meeting of the Soviet-Romanian commission in Odessa at 18.00-22.00 on June 30, a draft plan for the withdrawal of Romanian troops was developed, which was to be completed by 2 pm on July 3. The document signed by the representatives of the parties at 21.45 was sent to Proskurov and Moscow. It proposed the following evacuation order: "On 1.7 at 14.00, the Romanian units will

withdraw from the line: Seletin, Chiudei, Gliboka, Boyan, Dinautsi, Bricheni Sat, Edinet-Tyrg, Recha, Kishkareni, Calarasi, Chuchuleni, r. Kogilnik to Romanesti [Romanovo], China Lake.

Soviet troops should approach this line at 17.00 1.7.40. On July 2, the Romanian troops will advance from the line: Seletin, Krasna Il'ski, Glyboka, the northern outskirts of Novo Sulica, Korjeutsy, Gordinesti, Zaikani, Falesti, Korneshti, Varzareshti, Lapushna, Sarata-Galbena, Comrat, Bolgrad. Soviet troops

can enter this line starting from 12.00 2.7.40. The last frontier is the demarcation line in Bukovina, and then along the river. The Prut will be crossed by the Romanian troops at 2:00 pm on 3 July 40, when our and Romanian representatives will be on the ground, on the bridges, at the main crossing points of the Romanian troops across the new border.

Allocate representatives to the following areas: 1)

Storozhinets, Vikovuldesus. 2)

Guard, Glyboka. 3)

Chernivtsi, Glyboka. 4)

Chernivtsi, Seret [Siret]. 5)

Chernivtsi, Hertsa. 6)

Khotin, Sulica. 7)

Khotin, Lipkany.

8) Secureni, Bricheni Sat-Lipkany. 9) Edinet-Tyrg, Brynzeni. 10) Nikori, Rashkani-Tyrg-Branishta. 11) Balti, Skuleni. 12) Orhei [Orgeev], Ungeni. 13) Chisinau, Calarasi, Cornesti, Ungeni. 14) Chisinau, Gancheshty, Lapushna. 15) Chisinau, Cimislia, towards Leovo and Falciu. 16) Cimislia, Comrat, Bolgrad branching towards Cahul. 17) Tatarbunar, Bolgrad, Reni. The points of the first meeting between the representatives will be those that are located at the intersection of directions with the border, from which the Romanian troops will withdraw on July 1 at 14.00. Subsequent meetings are organized by the representatives themselves . "994 Having received this document, Zhukov, in the development of his directive No. 00151 at 21.55 on June 30, ordered the Military Council of the 9 Army: "Immediately send your responsible representatives to the Prut to the advanced units that came into contact with the outgoing Romanian units. Thoroughly instruct forward units on the procedure for advancing the Red Army troops and relations with the retreating units of the Romanian army, taking the following into account: to organize planning and order in the withdrawal of the Romanian units and the advancement of the Red Army units, to control and resolve disputes regarding the evacuation of various military equipment create mixed commissions consisting of two commanders of the Red Army and two Romanian officers. The created commissions should be in front of the crossings, where to observe and immediately determine what is subject to evacuation and what should remain on the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Only property belonging to the Romanian troops is subject to evacuation. All other property is not subject to evacuation, as property belonging to Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. The same commissions should decide on the distance between the retreating Romanian units and the units of the Red Army advancing forward. Units of the Red Army that have advanced ahead of the Romanian units are in no case subject to withdrawal, but must remain in place and away from the movement of the Romanian troops, without interfering with their movement. Under no circumstances should armed conflicts be allowed .

At 1.15 on July 1, the General Staff of the Red Army received a telephone message from the head of the Political Directorate from Chisinau army commissioner of the 1st rank Mehli:

"1. The Romanians stole over the river. Prut from the territory of Bessarabia almost the entire rolling stock (steam locomotives, wagons), which is a violation of paragraph "4" of the requirements of the Government of the USSR of June 27, 1940. I ask the Government of the USSR to put before the Government of Romania [the question] of the return of the locomotive and wagon fleet assigned to the railways of Bessarabia.

2. Many Bessarabians were drafted into the Romanian army and are on the territory of Romania. Families question about the return of Bessarabians from the Romanian army to Soviet Bessarabia.

I ask the Government of the USSR to raise the question before the Romanian government about the return of the Bessarabians to Soviet Bessarabia"996 .

During a new meeting of the Mixed Commission in Odessa, which opened at 12 noon on July 1, the Soviet side stated that in those places where the Red Army had already reached the state border line, it would not interfere with the evacuation of the Romanian troops. Where the Romanian troops have not yet withdrawn abroad, the plan of June 30 will be implemented⁹⁹⁷. In the meantime, given the complaints of Romanian diplomats that Soviet troops were detaining and disarming Romanian units, capturing bridges on the Prut, and Soviet paratroopers were stopping trains and columns of Romanian troops for inspection⁹⁹⁸, Shaposhnikov received an order to look into the situation and sent a corresponding request to Proskurov . In response, Zhukov reported to Moscow at 13:00 on July 1:

"1) The armies of the Southern Front, fulfilling the task assigned to them by the Government, by the end of June 30, advanced units reached the new state border along the entire length of the river. Prut and r. Danube. The mixed commission did not work until 30.6.40 due to the late arrival of representatives of the Romanian command. Therefore, until 30.6.40 there was no movement regulation by the mixed commission, and the troops of the Southern Front were guided only by the tasks assigned to them.

2) The looting and looting that had begun on the part of the departing Romanian troops, who, contrary to the agreement, took away cattle, rolling stock, wagons, etc., demanded the immediate deployment of Red Army detachments to the new state border on the route of withdrawal of the Romanian troops to prevent export from Bessarabia and Bukovina everything that is not subject to evacuation. Under these detachments, mixed commissions were formed from representatives of the Red Army and the Rumanian troops, which were entrusted with the task of determining what was not subject to evacuation, and detaining all this. The release of forward detachments to the river. The Prut in no way prevents the withdrawal of the Romanian troops and at the same time is a guarantee of the implementation of the agreement by the Romanian side.

3) Occupation of bridges across the river. Prut parts of the Red Army is also caused by the above circumstances. However, nowhere on any bridge did units of the Red Army detain, are not detaining and will not detain the withdrawal of the Romanian troops, except in cases where it is necessary to seize property that is not subject to evacuation from the departing Romanian troops.

4) Occupation of bridges across the river. The road and the drop of paratroopers are authorized by the People's Commissar of Defense. The parachute units of the Red Army were instructed not to impede the withdrawal of the Romanian troops, but only to monitor the exact implementation of the agreement regarding the evacuation of property by the Romanian troops.

5) The strictest instructions have been given to resolve all issues only by peaceful

means. 6) As for the return to the Romanian troops of weapons and materiel abandoned by them, I report that there was not a single case of the capture of these weapons by units of the Red Army, and even more so there were no cases of disarmament of the Romanian troops. The combat effectiveness of the retreating Romanian troops is falling sharply, the units are decomposing, and on a massive scale, the soldiers themselves drop their weapons up to the guns and disperse to their homes. There were cases when these weapons were dismantled by a criminal element. In order to avoid this, measures are being taken to collect weapons abandoned by the Romanian troops, to record

and store them"999 . On the same day, at 6 pm, Shaposhnikov informed Zhukov about the approval of the draft on the conditions for the procedure for the evacuation of Bessarabia by the Romanian troops, with the addition that the Soviet units that had already reached the state border line should let the Romanian troops through and, together with representatives of the Romanian command, control and prevent forcible removal of the population, property and livestock not belonging to the Romanian army1000 . Thus, Moscow actually approved the actions of the command of the Southern Front.

At 11.15 on July 2, Kozlov reported to Shaposhnikov by telephone that the Romanian delegation wanted to obtain permission to evacuate warehouses, state institutions, officials and other persons wishing to leave for Romania, and claims that the evacuation of the Romanian army was hampered by the rapid advance of Soviet troops. Therefore, the Romanian delegation insists on including all these points in the text of the agreement, otherwise it will not sign the agreement and all these issues will be resolved through diplomatic channels. Shaposhnikov replied that, apparently, it would be worthwhile to agree on the exchange of refugees to Bessarabia for refugees to Romania. Regarding the difficulties with the evacuation, the chief of the General Staff noted that no one interfered with the Romanian army, this is the result of its own disorganization. In his opinion, the refusal of the Romanian delegation to sign the agreement does not really bother anyone, since there are practically no Romanian troops in Bessarabia. The issue of warehouses will be decided in Moscow, so no unauthorized statements by the Soviet delegation should have been made1001 .

At the next meeting of the Soviet-Romanian commission in Odessa on July 3, an agreement was reached on a meeting at 11 am on July 5 in Siret, Ungheni, Reni and Izmail of representatives of the parties to transfer plans and schemes for mining, communications and engineering structures transferred to the Soviet Union territories. However, the transfer of these materials by the Romanian side was delayed. So, during a meeting of Soviet and Romanian officers on July 5 in Reni, Lieutenant Colonel Krucescu said that he would show the map, but would not give it away, although it could be copied. What exactly is mined, he does not know. The Soviet representatives drew up an act in which they outlined the situation, but the Romanian representative did not sign it, demanding the release of the detained Romanian officers who were carrying out mining work. A new meeting was scheduled for 3 p.m. on July 6. At the meetings in Siret and Ungheni, the Romanian side handed over only the schemes of mining, and refused to transfer the schemes of the barrier, defensive structures and communications. A new meeting of representatives of the parties was scheduled for 12.30 on 6 July.

Having received instructions from Moscow, on July 6, at the next meeting of the Mixed Commission, Kozlov again demanded that the Romanian side hand over communication schemes, mining and topographic maps. The Romanian representatives referred to the fact that since the communications in Bessarabia belonged to an American firm, there were no corresponding schemes in the General Staff. The transfer of the remaining materials has already been agreed, and its delay has nothing to do with the work of the commission. The Romanian side inquired about the position of the Soviet side on the issue of the evacuation of officials, families of officers and other persons wishing to return to Romania, and on warehouses. In the end, the documents on the mining of the territory of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia were received by the Soviet side at 12 o'clock on July 101002 .

Having learned about the resolution of the Bessarabian issue, the natives of the region from other regions of Romania rushed home, but the Romanian authorities tried to make their return difficult. On June 30, in Galati, Romanian police massacred those who wanted to return to Bessarabia, then Jewish pogroms took place in the city, as well as in Dorohoi, Siret and Iasi. During these excesses, up to 600 people died1003. In the end, wanting to achieve the return of officers and officials who remained in the territories that had ceded to the USSR, the Romanian side on July 3 agreed to the return of everyone to Bessarabia. For its part, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on the same day decided: "To receive the population evacuated by the Romanian government from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, who expressed a desire to return to their homeland, to carry out the following activities: 1. Organize the following checkpoints :

a) at the Vasilelupu station (against the mountains of Iasi),

consisting of 15 operational workers headed by a captain

Lebedev V.P.;

b) at the Reni station (against Galati), consisting of 15 operatives headed by Major N.A. Reshetov; c) in the mountains

Izmail, consisting of 15 operatives headed by Captain F.P. Nekrasov; d) at the Vakhoineshitie station (near

Chernivtsi) consisting of 15 operational workers headed by

captain Tarasenko V.A.

2. Pass to Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to be made on the basis of documents of the government bodies of Romania, proving the identity of their bearers, indicating the place of permanent residence before evacuation. 3. All citizens

returning from Romania to Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina should be registered with the NKVD, dubious ones should be obliged to report to the NKVD bodies every week - by territoriality, and suspicious and anti-Soviet elements should be arrested. 4. Citizens returning

to Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina to be sent for resettlement in places

permanent residence.

The work of checkpoints is carried out on the basis of the instructions developed by the NKVD of the USSR. 5.

To oblige the NKPS to provide the necessary number of rolling stock for the transportation of the returning population according to the requirements of the beginning. Office of the Border Troops of the Ukrainian SSR comrade. Osokin" 1004. Accordingly, at 19.15 on July 5, the troops of the Southern Front received instructions from Stalin and Timoshenko to immediately organize the reception of refugees from Romania. The troops were supposed to provide the refugees with food and transport, draw up lists of those returning to Bessarabia based on their survey and send them to their place of residence or to those areas where settlers are needed. The cattle returned by the Romanians had to be sorted and, after a veterinary examination, distributed among the refugees¹⁰⁰⁵. Fulfilling the order of the People's Commissar of Defense, the troops organized the reception of refugees from Romania and their transportation to their place of residence in carts or by rail. The sick were given medical care in hospitals, children were given milk.

Refugees reported robberies, persecution and harassment by the Romanian authorities, which was confirmed during their medical examination¹⁰⁰⁶. On July 13 and 15, the Soviet government protested against the facts of obstacles and bullying, perpetrated by the Romanian authorities, who wished to return to their native land. The Soviet side insisted that "the Romanian government take all necessary measures to ensure that these cases of bullying do not repeat and ensure normal conditions for the departure of the Bessarabians to their homeland"¹⁰⁰⁷. By the evening of July 10, the Soviet side received 45,749 people, by the evening of July 15 - 71,789 people, by the evening of July 19 - 99,700 people, by the evening of July 25 - 149,974 people (of which 121 (0.08%) were arrested people), and by the evening of July 31 - 165,402 people. The reception of refugees continued until December 16, 1940, when the total number of natives of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina who returned from Romania to their homeland reached 221,110 people, and about 200 thousand people left these territories together with the Romanian troops¹⁰⁰⁸. For its part, the Soviet government agreed on July 20 to allow the evacuation of Romanian officials, military personnel and civilians wishing to leave for Romania, where 13,750 people were repatriated¹⁰⁰⁹. In addition, on September 5, 1940, after short negotiations, a Soviet-German agreement was concluded on the evacuation to Germany from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina of the Germans living there. During the repatriation that began from September 23 to November 13, 1940, 133,138 people left for Germany¹⁰¹⁰.

Meanwhile, on July 3, at a regular meeting of the Mixed Commission in Odessa, the Romanian delegation agreed to discuss the issue proposed by the Soviet side on the return of railway rolling stock in exchange for state warehouses and institutions, officials and other persons wishing to leave for Romania. In connection with the rains, the Romanian delegation asked to extend the evacuation in central and southern Bessarabia. However, this request was rejected by the Soviet side. On July 4, an agreement was reached on the creation of two mixed commissions of railway specialists to discuss the issue of rolling stock withdrawn from the territory of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia. The commissions were supposed to start their work at 10 am on July 6 in Ungheni and Bagrinovka. On July 5, the consent of the Romanian government was obtained for the organization of three railway commissions in Bagrinovka, Ungheni and Reni¹⁰¹¹.

On July 7, negotiations began in Chisinau on the return of the rolling stock of the railways of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Romanian representatives offered to return 74 steam locomotives, 125 class and 1,345 freight cars, 10 railcars and 8 trailers. The Soviet side demanded the transfer of 419 steam locomotives, 726 class and 2,334 freight cars, 3,531 flatcars, 1,897 tanks, 1,481 mail-luggage cars and 35 rail cars¹⁰¹². After the return to Odessa of the Rumanian representatives who had gone to Bucharest for instructions, the Mixed Commission on July 13 continued its discussion of the question of rolling stock. Romania has expressed readiness to return 137 locomotives, 238 class and 2,371 freight wagons, 19 railcars and 25 trailers. The USSR insisted on the return of 274 steam locomotives, 551 cool and 6,976 freight cars, 35 railcars and 23 trailers. By territories, the proposals of the parties were distributed as shown in Table 9. Table 9 **Proposals of the parties at the**

negotiations on July 13, 1940¹⁰¹³

	Паровозы	Классные вагоны	Товарные вагоны	Цистерны	Автоматрисы	Прицепы
Бессарабия						
СССР	157	256	4 109	312	10	8
Румыния	74	131	1 313	34	8	10
Северная Буковина						
СССР	117	295	2 435	120	25	15
Румыния	63	107	1 000	24	11	15

In the end, after a series of approvals and field checks of information about the state of the railway transport of the territories transferred to the USSR, the parties came to the next version of the agreement. Since on June 27 in Bessarabia there were 154 locomotives, 256 class and 4,421 freight wagons, and after the evacuation 89 locomotives, 112 class and 2,121 freight wagons remained, 65 locomotives, 144 class and 2,300 freight wagons are subject to return. In Northern Bukovina there were 119 locomotives, 89 class and 1,227 freight wagons, 25 locomotives, 14 class and 645 freight wagons remained, therefore, 94 locomotives, 75 class and 582 freight wagons are subject to return. In total, 159 locomotives, 219 class and 2,882 freight cars will be transferred to the Soviet side. On July 28, the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, Molotov, approved this version of the agreement, which served as the basis for the Soviet-Romanian agreement signed on July 31. The transfer of property was to take place from August 5 to August 25, and 30 steam locomotives were to be transferred before September 25, 1940.¹⁰¹⁴

Meanwhile, the Mixed Commission in Odessa continued to discuss the issue of returning to Romania the military equipment remaining in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Back at 1.55 on June 30, the People's Commissar of Defense ordered the command of the Southern Front "to organize accounting and storage of war trophies captured on the territory of Bessarabia", and also to take under protection "barracks, stables, warehouses and other premises of the Romanian army" in order to "preserve them from damage and plunder"¹⁰¹⁵. By September 26, 1940, the following trophies were taken into account by the Soviet troops: 64,971 rifles and carbines, 7,697 revolvers and pistols, 1 machine gun, 1,071 light machine guns, 326 heavy machine guns, 149 small-caliber rifles, 1,080 hunting rifles, 6 anti-aircraft machine guns, 40 mortars, 258 guns, 16,976,773 cartridges, 70,189 grenades, 1,512 anti-tank mines, 23,643 mortar mines, 108,149 shells, 15 trucks, 38 cars, 2 buses, 3 tractors, 4 motorcycles with sidecars, 17 bicycles, 125 telephone sets, 1 radio set, 21,064 gas masks, 545.2 tons of fuel and lubricants, 117.5 km of telephone cable, 268,925 kg of barbed wire, 15,751 kg of explosives, sanitary, engineering and construction, convoy and clothing property, 10,137, 8 tons of food fodder, 36 barrels of oil, 98,600 cans and 40 boxes of canned food, 3.5 wagons of wine, 178 tons and 9 wagons of hay, straw and bran, 1176 horses, 60 heads of cattle, 220 sheep, 70 piglets¹⁰¹⁶.

At first, the Soviet side refused to consider Romanian counterclaims for military equipment left in Bessarabia, based on the statement of the Romanian delegation that the property was stolen by deserters. Then, on July 20, it was decided to detain all the military property of the Romanian army left in Bessarabia until the issue of returning the rolling stock of the railways to Romania¹⁰¹⁷ was resolved. In addition, on August 3, the Soviet side demanded the return of 11 passenger ships, 4 tugboats, 2 self-propelled and 13 non-self-propelled barges, 4 port motor boats and an iron two-pontoon landing stage¹⁰¹⁸ taken away from the river ports of Bessarabia. However, the concessions of the Romanian side on the issues of railway rolling stock and floating facilities of the Bessarabian ports made it possible to find a compromise.

On October 17, the Romanian delegation agreed to return to the USSR 2 passenger-and-freight ships, 1 tugboat, 3 cargo barges, 2 port boats, 4 metal floating piers and all port inventory equipment (tables, chairs, cabinets, scales, etc.). At 4 pm on October 27, an agreement was signed on the return of ships to the USSR, and military equipment to Romania. Accordingly, on October 29 - November 15, 1940, most of the military trophies of the Red Army were returned to Romania, which received 51,644 rifles, 1,080 light and 130 machine guns, 4,648 pistols, 36 mortars, 157 guns, 16,270,453 cartridges, 20,878 grenades, 115,138 shells and mines, and on November 13-17 ships and other property of ports were transferred to the Soviet Union¹⁰¹⁹. Meanwhile, on September 2, the Soviet-Romanian technical

commission began work to determine the losses and destruction inflicted by the Romanian army during the withdrawal from Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (from the Soviet side, Colonel V.V. Boloznev, from the Romanian side, General D. Karlaonts), which was engaged in verification of the submitted documents through witnesses or on site. Members of the commission visited Chisinau, Reni, Balti, Chernivtsi and Lipcani. During the negotiations, the Soviet side demanded from Romania that she pay for requisition bonds, receipts, receipts and invoices issued by the army for property and livestock to the population; loan bonds, savings and pension books of the population; government loan receipts; pay slips for May-June 1940; money transfers not received in Bessarabia; acts of Soviet state institutions, confirmed by testimonies, about losses during the evacuation period. The total amount of Soviet claims was 2,683 million lei. Field checks showed that the claims of the Soviet side were, as a rule, exaggerated and in many cases were not confirmed.

The Romanian side pointed to the overestimation or unfoundedness of Soviet claims and put forward its own counterclaims for a total amount of 2,130 million lei. In particular, the Soviet Union was required to pay the cost of state and military property and weapons remaining in the territories transferred to it, and the movable property of officers from the garrisons of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia, as well as to return the funds seized from repatriates to Romania. The mutual intransigence of the parties and the change in the international situation in the Balkans in the autumn of 1940 led to the fact that on November 22 the technical commission ceased its work. On October 30, the Romanian delegation from Odessa left for Bucharest, but did not return back, therefore, when on November 23 it became known that Romania had joined the Tripartite Pact, the Soviet delegation in the Mixed Soviet-Romanian Commission was dissolved. On November 24, this was reported to Romania, which accepted with satisfaction the refusal of the USSR to consider a number of issues.

The property exported from Bessarabia was sold in Romania at auction, and the income from its sale went to the state budget¹⁰²¹.

Feast of Liberation On the

evening of June 27, the Bessarabian regional organization of the Romanian Communist Party (RCP) and all the illegal political and public organizations under its leadership and influence came out of hiding. On the night of June 28, an emergency joint meeting of the Bessarabian regional and Chisinau city committees of the RCP was held, at which the Bessarabian Provisional Revolutionary Committee (VRC) was formed. S.D., who was still in the Chisinau prison, was elected its chairman. Burlachenko, and members - Yu. Korotkov, G. Dobynde, M. Brashan, P. Petrov (Guzun), A. Rubinshtein, D. Ostrovsky and others. restoration of the organs of Soviet power. To accomplish this task, local military committees were created in counties, cities, volosts and villages, as well as armed people's squads and people's militia detachments, committees for the assistance of the Red Army, temporary working committees at industrial enterprises and transport. The meeting also approved the text of the appeal to the population of Bessarabia, which was printed the same night in one of the Chisinau printing houses: "Citizens of liberated Bessarabia! For 22 years, the population of Bessarabia, having won freedom with their blood along with other peoples of the former Tsarist Russia, groaned under the yoke of the Belarusian invaders. The ruined, destitute population looked with envy at the other shore, where our brothers worked in a friendly struggle for peace and happiness. For 22 years, people lived with a bright hope for the future and fought for it in dungeons and prisons. Today, the future that we dreamed about is becoming real... On the day of the long-awaited holiday, we will give a worthy welcome to the heroes-liberators - the army of working people from all over the world»¹⁰²². In accordance with the reached Soviet-Romanian agreement on the peaceful resolution of the Bessarabian issue,

at 2 pm on June 28, the troops of the Southern Front entered the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. "Brothers Moldavians, Russians and Ukrainians! - said in the appeal of the front command to the local population. - The great hour of your liberation from the yoke of the Romanian boyars, landowners, capitalists and Sigurans has come. The stolen Soviet land - Bessarabia - is returned to its mother-Fatherland. In the great Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, in fraternal cooperation with the Russian, Ukrainian, Moldavian and other peoples, you are regaining your real Motherland..."¹⁰²³

As soon as the units of the Red Army crossed the demarcation line with Romania, they were greeted with great enthusiasm and joy by the population. "According to the reports of all border detachments, the population of Bessarabia and Bukovina greets our units and border guards cordially and with great enthusiasm"¹⁰²⁴. At 20.15 on June 28, Zhukov reported to Moscow: "The attitude of the population in literally all settlements is extremely good. The population in an organized and joyful manner meets the units of the Red Army with flowers and slogans "Long live Soviet Bessarabia!"¹⁰²⁵. All the villages and towns of Northern Bukovina were decorated with red banners and slogans that welcomed Stalin and members of the Soviet government. "Everywhere there is jubilation, triumph and indescribable delight and joy," the report of the Political Directorate of the 12th Army stated. Local residents greeted the Red Army soldiers with bread and salt, flowers and music, helped along the way, cleared the roads, and were glad to be able to speak Russian and Ukrainian¹⁰²⁶. In Chernivtsi, "red flags are on the houses. Cheers are heard in honor of Comrade Stalin, in honor of the valiant Red Army. For the transfer of the city in Chernivtsi, two companies of Romanian soldiers and one general remained. [...] There are a lot of people in the streets. Ukrainian speech sounds loudly, the people rush to the first free meetings and rallies. Political prisoners were released... Romanian soldiers, Ukrainians and Moldavians, who did not want to leave with the Romanian army, are also walking on the streets"¹⁰²⁷.

In Bessarabia, the inhabitants of Pridnestrovian settlements were the first to greet the Soviet soldiers-liberators. "With indescribable joy today, the peasants of the border Bessarabian village of Ataki, the inhabitants of the city of Khotyn, welcomed their native Red Army. The long-awaited day, the joyful moment of liberation has arrived. There is a great revival near the Dniester River. Here they went swimming one after another pontoon boats. Every few minutes more and more groups of fighters land on Bessarabian soil. They are surrounded by large crowds of peasants. Thunders a powerful "cheers" in honor of the valiant Red Army. Those gathered wholeheartedly proclaim the slogans: "Long live the great Stalin!", "Long live Comrade Molotov!" [...] Not far from the village of Ataki lies the city of Khotyn. When the units of the Red Army entered the city, hundreds of residents came out to meet them for 2-3 kilometers, warmly welcoming the long-awaited guests. Red flags appeared on the houses"¹⁰²⁸.

Everywhere, as soon as the columns of the Red Army units appeared, crowded rallies gathered, which resulted in an exciting demonstration of ardent love and gratitude of the workers of the liberated Bessarabia of the CPSU (b), the Soviet government, the fraternal peoples of the USSR, its mighty army. "Parts of the Red Army have just entered the village. Tanks crawled in, mechanized infantry drove up. And immediately, jubilant cheers sounded over the village, - reported the correspondent of Pravda from the village. Voronovitsa, Khotinsky district. The people enthusiastically greeted their liberators. The fighters were literally covered with flowers. Immediately, a rally arose spontaneously. In the square, in the center of the village, everyone gathered - from young to old. Eagerly, afraid to utter a word, they listened to the assembled speeches of the representatives of the Red Army. [...] The floor was taken by an old peasant woman Daria Tsyganyuk. Her fiery speech flowed from the very heart: "We lived in a dark prison

22 years old. Only from you, our sons and brothers, we waited for liberation. Many maternal thanks to you, red fighters! Thank you from us, from our children and grandchildren! Thanks to the person who sent you - thanks to my dear Stalin!
"1029

Soviet soldiers were greeted with enthusiasm in the city of Soroki, in Ataki, Rezina, Olonesti and other Pridnestrovian villages. "As soon as the units of the Red Army lowered the pontoon boats into the waters of the Dniester," the Krasnaya Zvezda newspaper wrote, "the peasants of the village of Kosoutsy [Kosovtsy], who ran out of their huts and gardens, rushed to the shore ... In a few minutes, while the Red Army men crossed in boats on the Bessarabian shore, hundreds of peasants had already gathered there... Like their beloved brothers, the Bessarabian peasants of the Red Army soldiers hugged and kissed them. Many of the peasants threw themselves into the water to support the pontoon boats carried by the swift current of the river. Everyone tried to help the Red Army soldiers cross the Dniester, pointed out the best places for the crossing, helped pull weapons and ammunition ashore. Residents of the villages of Sherpen and Speya greeted the Red Army with exclamations: "We have been waiting for you for 22 years." "It's not just talking to the officers, but we were afraid to come close, and you talk to us so simply and well," a peasant from the village of Pugachen Khaboy shared his impressions of the meeting with the Soviet commanders¹⁰³⁰.

In Bendery, thousands of citizens came out to meet the advanced units of the Soviet troops to the railway bridge across the Dniester. "The population of Bender happily welcomes the units of the Red Army. The roofs and balconies of houses are littered with people. Red banners fly everywhere. From the crowd, cries are often heard: "Long live red Bessarabia, long live the great mighty Soviet country!" Border guards and fighters distributing central newspapers are showered with flowers. Commanders and commissars, surrounded by excited people, willingly answer numerous questions. Everyone strives to hug and firmly shake hands with the fighters and commanders. In an organized manner, with red banners and slogans, the railroad workers of the Bulboki station came out to meet the soldiers-liberators. During a joyful meeting given to Soviet fighters and commanders, they reported that huge ammunition depots had been abandoned at the station by the Romanian troops, and voluntarily, in agreement with the Soviet command, organized an armed guard of these depots. The peasants of the village of Elizavetovka, Soroca district, responding to the call of the Committee for Assistance to the Red Army created by the Communists, repaired a large section of the road with the whole village in preparation for the meeting of the Soviet troops.

As parts of the Southern Front moved forward, more and more manifestations of the triumph of the liberated people took place. "The population of Bessarabia," stated one of the reports of the political department of the 9th Army, "with an unrelenting enthusiasm continues to meet the passing units of the Red Army, throwing flowers at them. Throughout the journey, the workers render great assistance in clearing the roads of wire obstacles and other obstacles, help to identify minefields and pull guns and other types of weapons ashore. As noted in another document, the peasants of remote villages, alone and in groups, went out to the roads for 10-15 or more kilometers to greet the units of the Red Army. So, a peasant from the village of Kamchik (now the village of Zarya, Saratsky district, Odessa region) F.A. Anguer, having walked more than 5 kilometers with his wife and three children, saw the first column of Soviet troops at the Sarata station, said: "I cannot express in words the great joy that I am experiencing now, in connection with our liberation from the Romanian yoke" ¹⁰³²

Large festive rallies and demonstrations under the slogans "Long live the Red Army!", "Long live the Soviet country!" these days were held in Chisinau, Bendery, Balti, Soroca, Orhei, Izmail, Cahul, Akkerman, Edinet, Briceni and many other places. The speakers warmly thanked the Soviet Union for helping the population of Bessarabia in the struggle against the Romanian invaders, for reunification with the Soviet Motherland. "The city of Balti has never seen such a celebration, such rejoicing," Pravda wrote. - Dressed in a festive way, proudly carrying red bows on their chests, yesterday [July 1] residents flocked to the central square. By 6 pm it was filled to overflowing. Ten thousand working people, who for the first time breathed freely after twenty-two years of bondage, gathered for a rally dedicated to the liberation of Bessarabia. Everyone has happy, radiant faces. Mothers came with children in their arms. The roar of joyful voices does not subside for a minute over the square. The people welcomed the soldiers and commanders of the Red Army. Toasts in honor of the Bolshevik Party, the Soviet government, in honor of the great Stalin are accompanied by a loud cheer. M. Subbotina, who spoke at the rally, said: "We were waiting for you, envoys of the great Soviet people. The days we are living now are the happiest of our lives. Thank you, Bolshevik Party, thank you, Soviet people, thank you, dear Stalin! Gancheshty spoke S.I. Gorskaya is the sister of the legendary hero of the Civil War G.I. Kotovsky: "I, like all residents of Bessarabia, am happy that I have lived to see the joyful moment when I can be called a citizen of the USSR. It was not for nothing that the blood of the people was shed... With all my heart I thank the Soviet government for freedom, for justice, for happiness, brought not only to me, but to all the working people of Bessarabia .

The Romanian documents paint the same picture of the joyful meeting of the Soviet troops. For example, according to the reports of the Romanian police, the population of "the city of Khotyn met the Soviet troops - on June 28, 1940 - in grandiose and full of enthusiasm forms ... showed sympathy for the invaders and hostility to our troops." As noted in another document, "the truth is that the vast majority of the population was seized with real joyful excitement, and it was so seized that the meeting with flowers in their hands, with banners, orchestras and refreshments is not a fluent fictitious information, but represents

a grandiose and spontaneous manifestation of joy at the arrival of the liberators, whom they have desired and expected for many years. In this regard, we should not make ourselves any illusion and no reproach, because that is exactly what happened and could not be otherwise .

Retired Romanian colonel N. Cherkez described the situation in Chisinau on the evening of June 28: "Immediately after the departure of the last train from Chisinau, a crowd of children and adults with red flags appeared on the platform, chanting the name of Stalin. The light came on at the entrance to the station from the direction of Tigina [Bender]. The crowd thought that the Soviet delegation was coming, and rushed towards them with shouts of "Hurrah!" 16-17-year-old teenagers, Jews were delighted. The Soviet delegation arrived much later, after it was completely dark. This description is fully consistent with the reports of the Soviet command. When Soviet fighters landed at the Chisinau airfield, "the population greeted our pilots joyfully and solemnly, with flowers." During the entry of the advanced units of the 9th Army into the city, "the population enthusiastically greeted the troops, despite the late hour of the entry of troops into Chisinau"¹⁰³⁷ .

On June 29, at a rally of 20,000 in Chisinau, a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, 1st Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine (b) N.S. Khrushchev, People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR Marshal S.K. Timoshenko, head of the Political Directorate of the Red Army, army commissar 1st rank L.Z. Mehlis¹⁰³⁸. The local residents who spoke at the rally thanked their liberators and talked about the sore. As the peasant said Chimishen, Chisinau district G. Altabuk, "We have been waiting for you for 22 years. Thank God we waited. We lived in poverty and hunger, but we knew that the Red Army would soon come. Earth and sky are buzzing from your machines. If the Romanians had seen all your equipment, they would have died of a broken heart."¹⁰³⁹ "I studied at the university in Bucharest," said a student who spoke at the rally. - As soon as it became known that negotiations were underway on Bessarabia, I and other comrades immediately dropped out of school and came home. Now, as you can see, we are members of the workers' militia and maintain order here. In Romania, all the books of Russian classics that were in the libraries were destroyed. In Chisinau there was a monument to Pushkin with the signature "A.S. Pushkin" in Russian. The mayor ordered this inscription to be cut down and made the same in Romanian." As the peasant Shapron, the owner of 1 hectare of land, believed, "before your arrival, our life existed only for the rich, but now we will live in a new way." In his speech, Boris Dvoretzky said: "For two years I served in the Romanian army, and all this time I suffered humiliation, insult and discontent from the Romanian officers. When I learned that the Red Army had crossed the Dniester, I threw down my weapons and fled, so as not to serve royal Romania, which I hated. Now I am a free citizen and for this I thank the Red Army and the Great Stalin, who freed us from

capitalist slavery . Then Timoshenko visited his native village of Furmanka, Akkerman district, where he met with his brother Yefim and numerous relatives. At 09:20 on July 2, the people's commissar of defense and his entourage flew from Chisinau to Moscow, where, after 17:00, Khrushchev and Timoshenko personally reported to Stalin on the situation

The following documents eloquently testify to the perception of the events that took place by their participants. Reporting on the events in Bessarabia, the border guard S. Sidorov wrote to his brother in Moscow: "Pavlusha, June 28, is probably the most significant day in my life. I will never forget the radiance of the sun, which dipped its face into the beautiful Dniester, and the faces shining with happiness ... And the smiles! [...] People picked us up, hugged and kissed us. Paul, Paul, if only he could see the ecstasy of a liberated people pouring out. [...] We walked through the streets of Bendery as if we were carried by some invisible wave. It was impossible to get out of this flow of people. Spontaneous rallies arose at every step, Soviet soldiers were buried in flowers, everyone shook hands with them, many gave them red ribbons .

On July 1, 1940, the newspaper "Basarabia Sovietica" published a letter from the workers of the Chisinau power plant addressed to the soldiers of the Red Army: "The mighty hand of our Motherland - the Great Soviet Union pulled us out of capitalist slavery. We have been waiting for this day for a long time. But liberation came with such speed, happiness came with such lightning speed that each of us asks ourselves, is this not a dream? No! Not a dream! Like frightened jackals, the Romanian boyars fled from our dear Bessarabia. Siguranza no longer exists, no more torture chambers that have choked us for 22 years. No more gendarmes and police. The yoke put on the working people of Bessarabia has been broken forever. The streets of our city have never been the same as now. Everywhere you meet happy, joyful faces. The red color of freedom flutters over all houses, pinned to the chest of every inhabitant. No, our freedom is not a dream! Powerful tanks of the valiant and invincible Red Army pass through the streets of Chisinau, as a threatening warning to all enemies of the Great Soviet Union... June 28, 1940... will forever remain in our memory as the most beautiful, brightest day of our lives. [...] The heavy nightmare has come to an end. A new era has begun, a new life has begun for each of us. And for this life we must thank the Soviet government, the soldiers-liberators of the Red Army. [...] The sun of freedom has risen over Bessarabia, over our Moldavian people"¹⁰⁴³ . In a letter from the residents of To T. Rabey, K.

Unguryan, G. Onchan, A. Krikhan and others of the Singerei district of Balti uyezd, the newspaper said: "We can't get enough of the days we have lived to see, when we can fearlessly and loudly talk about the grievances and pains we have experienced. A month ago, no one remembered us. Moreover, when bitterness overflowed the cup of our suffering and we rebelled, the percheptor (tax collector. - M.M.), the gendarme, the priest and the notary - the faithful dogs of the Romanian capitalist regime - sank their teeth into us from all sides and made our life unbearable ... Finally got rid of. The joy that seized us at the hour of liberation, we

unable to describe. The Red Army, our army of peasants and workers, has liberated us forever from the yoke of the capitalist brigands. From now on, we will not starve, for we will be guaranteed bread. The peasants will henceforth have rights and not only duties. Schools will enlighten the minds of all those who are drawn to the light of knowledge. The dawn of a new happy life has dawned for our children .

Such a heated meeting with the population of Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia of the Soviet troops was also facilitated by the behavior of the retreating Romanian army, which tried to "evacuate" everything that came to hand. Money, horses, pigs, poultry, oxen and wagons were taken from the population under the threat of reprisal. The rolling stock of railways was stolen from the territories transferred to the Soviet Union, fire-fighting equipment, tables and chairs were taken out. The people's militia tried to prevent the robbery of the occupiers, often coming under fire from the Romanian soldiers. In some cases, the population armed themselves with weapons left by the Romanian soldiers, pursued the columns of the retreating Romanian troops, attacked them and took away the stolen property and horses¹⁰⁴⁶. It is clear that the actions of the Soviet troops to inspect the departing Romanian units and seize the seized property from them supported the enthusiasm of the local population in connection with the arrival of the Red Army.

This was also facilitated by the active agitation of groups of propagandists who traveled around the settlements. During the Bessarabian operation, newspapers and leaflets in the Russian, Ukrainian and Romanian languages were published by a printing train, the total output of which amounted to 2,120 thousand copies. 8 editions of newspapers were created (3 in Russian, 1 in Ukrainian, 4 in Romanian and Moldavian), which were sent to the county centers of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, where daily newspapers were published. Later, these editorial offices were taken over by local authorities. Newspapers published in the districts made it possible to widely cover the local population with the press, for whose entertainment cinema installations and theaters of the Ukrainian SSR and KOVO were attracted. The total volume of printed books, brochures, leaflets, maps and similar publications amounted to 2,539 thousand

copies¹⁰⁴⁷. Unfortunately, the advance of the Red Army was not without tragic accidents. So, when a car with soldiers of the 378th Infantry Regiment of the 173rd Infantry Division drove through the village of Grushevka, boys ran after it, to whom the Red Army soldiers threw small Soviet coins. Several other boys rushed from the crowd onto the road, and they accidentally pushed an 11-year-old boy who was standing on the side of the road, who fell and hit his head under the rear wheel of the truck. 6 km from Chisinau, a 16-year-old teenager was crushed by a car of the 352nd artillery regiment, who tried to jump on the bandwagon of the car on the move¹⁰⁴⁸. In the course of the liberation of Bessarabia by the Soviet troops, there were facts of "junk" - purchases by Soviet military personnel of various manufactured goods (watches, shoes and manufactory), which was actively suppressed by the command and political agencies¹⁰⁴⁹.

On July 3, on the Cathedral Square of Chisinau (in Soviet times - Victory Square) at 14.00-16.00, a parade of Soviet troops took place, in which units of the 35th Rifle Corps, the 173rd Rifle Division and the 4th Tank Brigade participated (people - 8,364, guns - 279, tanks - 102, armored vehicles - 16, tractors - 108, vehicles - 79, aircraft - 336). The parade was commanded by Lieutenant General V.I. Boldin, and was received by the commander of the Southern Front, General of the Army G.K. Zhukov. The parade was attended by Lieutenant Balyasnikov's tank, which was the first to enter the city on June 28. "Aleksandrovskaia Street in Chisinau has taken on a festive, elegant look," Pravda wrote. - Portraits of members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR Comrade. Tymoshenko, posters, slogans, red flags adorn the main street... Tens of thousands of workers, employees, intellectuals with children came to see the armed forces of the socialist motherland. They lined the place of the parade in tight rows, lined up along the entire street. Joyful faces, beaming smiles, enthusiastic exclamations, cries of greeting..." After the parade, a grandiose demonstration of almost 100,000 people took place. "The whole city, young and old, was on the streets. Columns with banners and portraits of leaders, with flags and flowers, walked along the Alexander's endless line. People stood like trellises on the sidewalks, greeting each passing column with shouts of "Hurrah". Every balcony was crowded with people. The boys hung in clusters in the trees. Songs, cries of "Hurrah", exclamations of jubilation rolled from end to end of the ebullient

On the same day, "in commemoration of the liberation of the working people of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina from the yoke of the Romanian boyars, landlords and capitalists and the return of Bessarabia and northern Bukovina to the great USSR," the troops of the Southern Front held parades in Chernivtsi (the 131st Rifle, 16th Cavalry divisions and the 5th tank brigade: people - 8,892, horses - 4,561, tanks - 190, aircraft - 205), Cimislia (the 9th cavalry division participated: people - 2,739, horses - 2,795, guns - 46, machine guns carts - 48), Romanovo (the 32nd cavalry division participated: people - 3,520, horses - 3,567, guns - 46, armored vehicles - 9, machine-gun carts - 52, vehicles - 18, aircraft - 3), Benderakh (participated 51— I rifle division: people - 3,139, horses - 530, guns - 120, tanks - 12, tractors - 66, vehicles - 32) and Akkerman (the 74th rifle division participated: people - 1,203, horses - 130, guns - 16, aircraft - 53). In the extreme south of Bessarabia, in the vicinity of Izmail, on July 3, at the direction of the district committee of the CPSU (b), paratroopers of the 201st airborne brigade were parachuted into 17 settlements to organize Soviet power. This event made a great impression on the local population.

On July 4, parades were held in Storozhinets (the 34th Cavalry Division and the 23rd Tank Brigade participated: 4,340 people, 4,530 horses, 180 tanks), Khotyn (the 5th Cavalry Division participated: 4,320 people, horses - 4400,

tanks - 46), Novoselytsia (participated by the 3rd cavalry and 58th rifle divisions: people - 8,300, horses - 4,520, tanks - 50) and Beltsy (the 169th rifle division participated: people - 4,150, tanks - 12, armored vehicles - 18). "The parades went well. The population joyfully greeted the passing units of the Red Army and its military equipment. In all cities, the parades were accompanied by thousands of demonstrations of the population.

As a result of the solution of the Bessarabian issue, the Soviet Union received a territory of 50,762 square meters. km with a population of 3,776 thousand people. On July 10, 1940, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks entered the Supreme Soviet of the USSR with a proposal to create the Moldavian SSR. The 7th session of the Supreme Council, which discussed this issue at the evening meeting on August 2, heard a delegation of the working people of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina convey gratitude to "all the working people of the great Soviet motherland for liberation from the chains of capitalist slavery." Speaking on behalf of the Bessarabian people, a teacher from Orgeev Z.A. Crechunescu said that "we all, as one, want only one thing: the speediest fraternal reunification with the Moldovan people." Delegate from Northern Bukovina N.S. Mikhachuk declared that the working people of his native land "are burning with an ardent desire to forever reunite with the Ukrainian people in a single Ukrainian socialist state"¹⁰⁵². After a short discussion, the Supreme Council adopted the law "On the Formation of the Federal Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic", according to which the central districts of Bessarabia and 6 districts of the Moldavian ASSR were united into a new union republic of the USSR, and 8 districts of the Moldavian ASSR were included in the Odessa region. At the same meeting, the law "On the inclusion of the northern part of Bukovina and Khotyn, Akkerman and Izmail districts of Bessarabia into the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic" was adopted, the territory of which expanded due to the formation of Chernivtsi and Akkerman (since December 7, 1940 renamed Izmail) regions¹⁰⁵³. At 20:00 on August 10, a reception was held in the Kremlin in honor of the delegation of the workers of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, the plenipotentiary

commissions of the People's Seimas of Lithuania, Latvia and the State Duma of Estonia, which became a demonstration of the friendship of the multinational Soviet people. "Today I am infinitely happy, as our entire Moldovan people is happy," Z.A. said in her speech. Crechunescu. – The heavy, nightmarish past is gone forever. The welcome we received here in Moscow, the high confidence placed in us, will be an unfading guiding star for us. We promise to work under the leadership of the Soviet Government, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, so that our Moldavia will flourish more brightly. Thanks to the Red Army and its leaders - comrades Voroshilov and Timoshenko! Thanks to the head of the Soviet Government, Comrade Molotov, thanks to the great leader of the peoples, Comrade Stalin!" Chernivtsi worker N.S. Mikhachuk said: "From the bottom of our hearts we thank the Communist Party, our own father, Comrade Stalin. For a long time we suffered under the yoke of the Romanian boyars. But now it's all over. Our tears have dried up, we are in our own family. Long live our father and liberator Comrade Stalin!"¹⁰⁵⁴ In the greeting to Stalin and Molotov, conveyed on August 14 by the delegation of the working people of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina at the VII session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in particular, it was said: "The peoples of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina will never forget all that what did you, Comrade Stalin, and the

Soviet Government, headed by Comrade Molotov, do to reunite the Moldavian and Ukrainian peoples. The Soviet Union and its heroic Red Army made it possible for us, as children, to cling to our mother, our beloved homeland.

A fence of Romanian bayonets separated us for many years from our half-brothers on the other side of the Dniester, where the Moldavian and Ukrainian peoples lived in a happy family of Soviet peoples. In the

most difficult years of lack of rights, need and inhuman suffering, we, the oppressed, were warmed by one thought, one feeling: - There

is Moscow in the world! There is Stalin - the leader and father of the working people of the whole world. Your name, Comrade Stalin, inspired us to fight against our oppressors.

And now the wish has come true. We are free. The peoples of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina joined the fraternal family of the native socialist fatherland"¹⁰⁵⁵.

The socio-economic transformations that have begun, and above all the agrarian reform, during which only in the new regions of the Moldavian SSR, by redistributing 258,540 hectares (11.6%) of agricultural land in favor of 184,715 (39.9%) peasant households, it was possible to completely eliminate landlessness and the lack of land of the peasants,¹⁰⁵⁶ supported the enthusiasm of the population for the new government. This was clearly manifested during the elections of deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from the new regions of the Moldavian SSR, Chernivtsi and Izmail regions of the Ukrainian SSR, which took place on January 12, 1941. Out of 2,306,702 voters in these territories, 2,293,473 (99.6%) took part in the elections, of which 2,275,836 (99.2%) people voted for the proposed candidates. At the same time, elections of deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR were held, in which 1,555,914 (99.6%) out of 1,561,872 voters took part and 1,543,880 (99.2%) people voted for the proposed candidates¹⁰⁵⁷.

Summing up the events related to the resolution of the Bessarabian issue, Molotov, in his report at the evening meeting of the VII session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on August 1, 1940, noted that "as you know, the Romanian government accepted our proposal, and the conflict between the Soviet Union that had dragged on for 22 years and Romania was resolved peacefully. Living on the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, mainly Ukrainians and Moldavians, got the opportunity to join the friendly family of the Soviet peoples and live a new life - the life of a people liberated from the power of the Romanian boyars-landlords and

capitalists. We now know with what great joy the population of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina joined the ranks of Soviet citizens. [...] The borders of the Soviet Union moved in connection with this to the west and reached the Danube River, which, after the Volga, is the most powerful river in Europe and one of the most important trade routes for a number of European countries. You know, comrades, that the entire Soviet people met with great joy and satisfaction the successful resolution of the long-awaited question of Bessarabia. On the other hand, our relations with Romania must now enter a completely normal course .

Conclusion

Joint participation in the First World War, oddly enough, did not improve Russian-Romanian relations. The Romanian leadership was unhappy that, at the insistence of Russia, he had to agree to limit his territorial claims in Bukovina only to its southern part. This only fueled Bucharest's fears that, after achieving victory, Russia would be able to limit other aspirations of Romania, especially in the Banat, which was also promised to Serbia. Against the background of this latent suspicion, it does not seem strange that the Romanian leadership was confident that Russian military assistance was provided in insufficient quantities and was not effective enough. It is clear that at the same time, the fact of the almost complete defeat of the Romanian army, thrown alone into a senseless offensive, seemed to recede into the background, hiding behind the patriotic rhetoric of the creation of "Great Romania". Actually, at the front in Romania, the relationship between Russian and Romanian troops was no better. According to the correspondent of the Petrograd Telegraph Agency V. Yanchevetsky (better known later under the pseudonym V. Jan), "the attitude of the Romanian soldiers towards the Russians, as well as the officers, is unfriendly. They cannot understand our soldiers, who are indignant with the Romanians because, while giving their lives for them, the shooters do not receive help, devotion and gratitude from the Romanians .

It is clear that the revolution that broke out in Russia in February 1917 and the growing chaos at the front in the following months, first of all, greatly frightened the Romanian elite, who feared the spread of rebellious sentiments in their own country. However, it gradually became clear that the Romanian army, which entered the war only a year ago, unlike the Russian army, had not yet been imbued with a sense of the aimlessness of the war and retained a relatively high patriotic impulse, framed in the slogan of the liberation of the Romanian brothers from the yoke of Austria-Hungary. Already the August battles of 1917 showed the greater stability of the Romanian troops in comparison with the Russians, who had lost their common goals and were gradually splitting along national and political lines.

After November 1917, when the new Russian Soviet government announced its readiness to withdraw from the war, Romania faced a choice. It was necessary either to reach an agreement with the countries of the Quadruple Alliance, which, in turn, required a certain agreement with the allies in the Entente, or to repeat the feat of the Serbian army - to abandon the defense of the national Romanian territory and retreat to the expanses of southern Russia. It is clear that the Romanian leadership, accustomed to enjoying the fruits of other people's victories and, therefore, more prone to diplomatic tricks, chose the first option.

Accordingly, Romania began to prove to the Entente countries that she was not in a position to continue the war alone, and therefore the Allies must agree that she would reach a separate agreement with the countries of the Quadruple Alliance. At first, the Anglo-French leadership was not inclined to encourage such moods in Bucharest, but as the situation in Russia and the general situation on the former Eastern Front developed, it tacitly agreed with this Romanian position, counting on the fact that the Romanian troops could be used to suppress the Soviet movement in the border areas. with Romanian regions of Russia. For their part, the countries of the Quadruple Alliance, interested in eliminating the front in the East, tried to get maximum concessions from Romania with the help of blackmail, primarily in relation to raw materials and agricultural supplies. Bessarabia was offered as compensation for the ceded territories to Romania. Moreover, it turned out that the Anglo-French allies also support this idea.

Meanwhile, in Bessarabia, in the context of the growing agrarian movement, the strengthening of the positions of the Soviets and the strengthening of the Bolshevik influence in them, as well as the inability of the Provisional Government to control the situation, the Moldavian national movement intensified its activities among the Moldavian military, which made it possible to create a regional body "Sfatul Tarii". It is clear that there was no unity among the local political forces on the issue of the future of Bessarabia: some saw it as an autonomy within Russia, others wanted to create an independent state. Only Moldovan nationalists, acting on Romanian money, advocated unification with Romania, but their position was not popular. However, using the dissatisfaction of other political forces with the strengthening of the Bolsheviks in the Soviets and referring to the example of Ukraine, they managed to achieve on December 2 (15), 1917, the proclamation of the Moldavian People's Republic (MPR) as part of the Russian Federation. Under these conditions, only the direct occupation of Bessarabia by the Romanian army could contribute to the realization of the territorial claims of Romania.

Taking advantage of the consent of their allies and opponents and the requests of the anti-Soviet part of the officers of the Russian Romanian Front, the Romanian leadership was able to defeat the soldiers' committees and disarm the Russian units inclined to support the Soviet regime. In fact, with these December events of 1917, the open intervention of Romania in the events of the Russian revolution begins. It is clear that these

the actions of the Romanian authorities caused a negative attitude of the RSFSR, which, however, was forced to confine itself to diplomatic protests. The collapse of the former Russian Empire and political chaos in the south of the country was considered by the Romanian leadership as a necessary condition for the capture of Bessarabia. Therefore, in January 1918, the Romanian troops crossed the river. Prut and entered the territory of the RSFSR, which, naturally, led to the rupture of diplomatic relations with Romania from Petrograd.

Under the conditions of political disengagement in Bessarabia, national organizations reacted more calmly to the Romanian invasion, seeing in it a guarantee against social movements, which were generally based on the ideas of international solidarity of workers. The propertied social strata saw in the Romanians guarantors against the leveling tendencies of the revolution, while the Bessarabian peasants, on the contrary, saw the threat of losing the land they had received. Only the top of the Moldavian national movement enthusiastically accepted this fact, but was forced to hide this position for the time being due to the generally wary attitude of the local, including the Moldavian, population towards the Romanians. Moreover, it was necessary to hide the long-term goal - the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania. In the meantime, they managed to achieve the proclamation of the independence of the MPR. For their part, the Romanian troops in every possible way propagated the version that their arrival in Bessarabia was connected only with the need to restore order on the railways and protect warehouses with food purchased to

supply Romania. At the same time, the Romanian invasion hastened the consolidation of supporters of the Soviet government, who were ready to defend the gains of the revolution with arms in their hands. Moreover, in this case, it was about an external invasion, and not about an internal Russian conflict. If at first the Romanians met only scattered resistance from small detachments, then by mid-February 1918 the Soviet command had already managed to organize more significant resistance along the line of the river. Dniester and in the south of Bessarabia. Moreover, by the end of February, Soviet detachments began to go on the offensive, and the Romanian units faced the prospect of repelling the Soviet offensive with a very turbulent rear, since occupied Bessarabia, which had already tasted the bitter fruits of Romanian domination, was not at all going to remain an outside spectator. Under these conditions, fearing the defeat of troops in Bessarabia, which could strengthen social movements in Romania itself, the Romanian leadership decided to settle relations with the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR. Among other things, this allowed at that moment to gain time and assess the consequences of the German-

Austrian-Hungarian offensive in Ukraine. As a result, a Soviet-Romanian agreement was concluded, according to which the Romanian side assumed the obligation to withdraw its troops from Bessarabia within two months. Although under the conditions of the German-Austrian-Hungarian occupation of Ukraine, the Romanian government was not going to implement this agreement, the very fact of its signing by the Romanian side was of great importance from the point of view of international relations, since it testified to the recognition by Romania of the fact of the occupation of the territory of a neighboring state. In the meantime, the Romanian leadership, confident that Russia would no longer be reborn, under the cover of German-Austrian-Hungarian bayonets in the spring of 1918, decided to formalize the annexation of Bessarabia. For this, the Moldovan national movement, which exists on Romanian money, was used, which, with the help of bribery and threats from the Romanian troops, managed to push through the "Sfatul Tarii" the decision to unite the MPR with Romania on autonomy terms. Somewhat later, this fact was recognized in

the peace treaty between Romania and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance. However, the approaching end of the First World War and the defeat of the Quadruple Alliance set before Romania the task of holding the captured Bessarabia and obtaining a number of territories of the former Austria-Hungary. The first step on this path was the return of Romania to the Entente, for which it was necessary to declare war on Germany again a day before the armistice agreement on the Western Front came into force. Now territorial issues were to be resolved at a peace conference in Paris, but before its opening by the Romanian authorities in Sfatul Tarii, "a parody was played of voting for a complete union of Bessarabia with Romania without any autonomy"¹⁰⁶⁰. Nevertheless, at first, Romanian territorial claims did not evoke a noticeable positive reaction in Paris. However, the Romanian leadership very quickly discovered that Romania's participation in the fight against Bolshevism in Russia and especially in Hungary significantly increased its chances of realizing its territorial aspirations.

At the same time, England and France were in no hurry to recognize Bessarabia as Romanian territory, since, while providing some support to the White movement in Russia, they were forced to reckon with its negative attitude towards the rejection of the outlying territories of the country. However, as the successes of the Reds in Paris grew, the tendency to agree to the direct transfer of Bessarabia to Romania began to intensify. A significant role in making this decision was also played by the desire to prevent Soviet influence at the mouth of the Danube, which was an important economic artery of Central and South-Eastern Europe. All this, as well as the completion of the redistribution of the spheres of influence of Western countries in the Romanian oil industry, led to the signing of the Paris Protocol on Bessarabia, which was recognized as part of Romania. At the same time, it should be remembered that the countries that signed this protocol had no right to transfer Russian territory to Romania, which occupied and annexed it. All

this time, the Soviet governments of Russia and Ukraine constantly protested against the Romanian occupation and declared their non-recognition of any decision to seize Bessarabia without their consent. Moreover,

in the spring of 1919, when Soviet troops again reached the Dniester, the possibility of a military solution to the Bessarabian issue arose. Unfortunately, the internal problems associated with the Grigoriev rebellion, and especially with the start of the offensive of Denikin's army in the Donbass, did not allow this opportunity to be realized. The next time the Red Army was on the Dniester in February 1920, but the general condition of the Soviet republics devastated by the Civil War did not contribute to the continuation of hostilities, and the Soviet governments tried to reach a political agreement with their western neighbors, including Romania, which, for its part, demonstrated non-interference in domestic affairs. This tacit compromise became the basis for maintaining peace between the two countries, which did not even have diplomatic relations.

The threat of war with Romania intensified during the period of large-scale battles on the Soviet-Polish front and the activation of the Wrangel army in the Crimea and Northern Tavia in the summer of 1920. The Entente pushed Romania to intervene in events on the side of Poland, and the Soviet leadership tried to keep it from this step, alluding to the possibility of an agreement beneficial to Romania on Bessarabia. As a result, the internal situation in Romania contributed to its neutrality, but Moscow's attempts to start political negotiations with it were unsuccessful, since the Romanian side set the Soviet recognition of Bessarabia as part of Romania as an indispensable condition for the start of these negotiations. It is clear that the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, which considered the issue of Bessarabia as an important trump card in the dialogue with Romania, were not going to just let it go. Under these conditions, any agreement on the Soviet-Romanian border was impossible, and the rapprochement between Romania and Poland and their orientation towards France in their eastern policy did not contribute to the normalization of

relations between Bucharest and the Soviet republics. It should also be remembered that the states divided by the Dniester were in unequal conditions on the world stage. Romania was an internationally recognized state that had influential allies in Poland, the countries of the Little Entente and France, while the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR were still unrecognized republics, trying to resolve a number of internal problems associated with the consequences of the Civil War. All this pushed the Romanian leadership to be intransigent in the Bessarabian issue and to cultivate the image of a "defender of European civilization" on the Dniester. In the context of constant incidents on the Soviet-Polish border and on the demarcation line along the Dniester, the Soviet military-political leadership feared the outbreak of a new war in 1921, and the raids of various anti-Soviet formations from the territory of Poland and Romania provoked retaliatory actions of the Soviet special services. It is no coincidence that the Soviet-Romanian diplomatic correspondence at that time was filled with mutual claims regarding incidents on the demarcation line. At the same time,

the parties managed to agree on the start of direct preliminary negotiations, which took place on September 22 - October 25, 1921 in Warsaw. During these negotiations, Romania tried to achieve recognition by the Soviet side of the annexation of Bessarabia, and the Soviet representatives sought the establishment of diplomatic relations with Bucharest. As a result, no agreement was reached, since the parties were not going to make concessions. A similar outcome of the Warsaw Conference and the invasion of the Tiraspol region by the Petliura detachment from the territory of Bessarabia occupied by Romania, with the explicit support of the Romanian border guard, of course, did not improve Soviet-Romanian relations. In addition to

the territorial issue, an important problem in Soviet-Romanian relations was the issue of Romanian valuables evacuated to Russia during the First World War, payment for Russian wartime supplies to Romania, as well as captured Russian state property in Bessarabia and Romania¹⁰⁶¹. It is clear that each of the parties believed that it was she who suffered the most damage. True, during 1922 the Soviet side probed Romania for its renunciation of financial claims in exchange for the Soviet renunciation of claims to Bessarabia. However, the Romanian leadership did not support this idea, although, apparently, this was the moment when Bucharest would most likely be able to get Moscow's consent to annexing Bessarabia. The formation of the USSR and the general normalization of the situation in Eastern Europe allowed the parties to agree on measures to prevent incidents on the demarcation line along the Dniester. At the same time, Romania refused to conclude a trade agreement, not wanting to allow Soviet representatives to Bucharest, where, in her opinion, they could engage in communist agitation.

In the meantime, the parties have reached an agreement to hold new talks in Vienna. For the Soviet side, this was another reason to declare their rights to Bessarabia, and the Romanian leadership tried to close the Bessarabian issue. The Soviet proposal to hold a plebiscite in Bessarabia, of course, was not accepted by Romania, which understood better than anyone how exactly the vote of the Bessarabian population would end. Along with promoting the idea of a plebiscite, the Soviet leadership tried to neutralize the support of Romania in the Bessarabian issue on the part of the countries that signed the Paris Protocol of 1920. True, the influence of the Soviet Union on the world stage was so small that its position on this issue did not affect France and Italy, which ratified this protocol. At the same time, Soviet diplomacy managed to ensure that Japan, which was in no hurry to ratify this document, practically postponed this issue for an indefinite period. Another task of Soviet foreign policy was the desire to split the Polish-Romanian military alliance, but no noticeable success was achieved along this path. The USSR tried to use the protocol on the early entry into force of the Briand-Kellogg Pact to reach a non-aggression agreement with Poland, but Warsaw achieved Romania's participation in this

agreement.

In addition to bilateral Soviet-Romanian relations, the Bessarabian issue also touched upon the problems of the international regime of the Danube and, consequently, the relations of the USSR with the great European powers. In the "Work Plan of the Commission on the International Political Situation and the Danger of War", the analysts of the Comintern noted that the Bessarabian issue is of fundamental importance for Moscow in terms of influence in the region, since "the entry of Bessarabia into the USSR would have as its direct result the transformation of the Soviet Republic into a Danubian power. With the mouth of the river in its hands, the Soviet Union could regulate its relations with the countries along the Danube much more successfully and [...] could reopen the most convenient route for the trade of the Soviet south with the Balkans and Central Europe. This circumstance, undoubtedly, also plays an important role in the Bessarabian policy of the imperialist powers... The passing of the mouth of the Danube into the hands of the Soviet Union would put an end to the French megalomaniac plans for domination over the great Danube waterway .

In the meantime, in the spring of 1918, the policy of Romanization began to be implemented in occupied Bessarabia with the aim of incorporating it into Romania. Bucharest actually refused to fulfill its promises to preserve the autonomy of the province. The specificity of the unification policy of Romania in Bessarabia was due to the fact that the local population (Moldovans, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans, Jews, Gagauz and others) did not consider themselves Romanians and hoped for a speedy expulsion of the invaders. As a result, active and passive opposition to Romanian domination grew in the region. Accordingly, the Romanian authorities considered all Bessarabians to be troublemakers and accomplices of the Bolsheviks, and repressions in the region became the norm. The electoral system of Romania excluded the possibility for the Bessarabian population to influence state policy. The economic separation of the region from the eastern markets has led to a noticeable economic decline, the archaization of the social structure of the population and the growth of chronic socio-demographic problems. Romania's international obligations regarding the observance of the rights of national minorities did not correspond to the goals of the Romanian elite and, as a rule, were not fulfilled in Bessarabia.

Despite the accelerated planting of the Romanian language, the population of the region continued to widely use the Russian language and ended up in Romania in fact in the position of "second-class" people. As the Romanian newspaper *Universul* admitted on April 5, 1934, "the situation of Romanianism 15 years after the unification of Bessarabia is extremely bad. The Romanianization of Bessarabia, especially of cities and towns, is delayed... The Bessarabian soul, still living in the mirage of old Russia, cannot be close enough to the national aspirations of a united Romania"¹⁰⁶³. Two years later, the head of the political department for the Romanianization of Bessarabia, O. Gibu, admitted that "by its nature, Bessarabia is now more Russian than in 1918. The fact that almost everyone knows the Romanian language does not change the situation, since the Russian language remains dominant everywhere. In the city they speak Russian, they read the Russian press, and this greatly hinders the establishment of Romanianism. The ideology of nationalism, which was the basis of Romanian domestic politics, was used by the authorities to rank national minorities. As a result, the Russians in Bessarabia turned out to be the most oppressed population. Culturally, Bessarabia was never integrated into Romania and throughout the entire interwar period remained an economically backward agrarian outskirts of the country"¹⁰⁶⁵ . Growing contradictions in Europe at the turn of the 1920s–1930s. led

to a change in the international position of the USSR. The normalization of Soviet-French relations that began in the spring of 1931 demanded that the French allies in Eastern Europe take coordinated steps towards Moscow. As a result, under pressure from France and Poland, Romania agreed to negotiate with the Soviet Union on a non-aggression pact. During these negotiations, which for both sides were a concession to France and Poland, Moscow and Bucharest achieved different goals. Romania once again tried to achieve Soviet consent to the recognition of Bessarabia as Romanian territory, and the USSR hoped to establish diplomatic relations with Bucharest. What was new in these negotiations was that the parties decided not to touch on the Bessarabian issue, although, of course, he was invisibly present behind the scenes of any of their proposals. Having failed to achieve their goals, the parties stopped negotiations, and Soviet diplomacy managed to outplay Romanian diplomacy and still conclude non-aggression pacts with France and Poland, somewhat neutralizing the anti-Soviet orientation of the Franco-Romanian and Polish-Romanian treaties. If we take into account that during 1932 the USSR concluded similar treaties with all its northwestern neighbors, then Romania retained its position as the only western neighbor, relations with which remained unsettled.

In the meantime, in December 1932, Germany managed to achieve recognition of equal rights in the matter of armaments on the part of the Western powers, which clearly indicated a new step towards the revision of the Versailles system. This, and especially the negotiations on the "Pact of Four", aroused the concern of the small Eastern European countries, who were afraid of losing French support. As a result, the countries of the Little Entente decided, on the one hand, to strengthen their alliance, and on the other hand, to try to take into account in their foreign policy the fact of the strengthening of Germany's position. The Romanian leadership did not remain aloof from this problem, which still continued to focus on France and England, but from the beginning of the 1930s began to take into account the need to improve relations with Germany, which was becoming an increasingly significant foreign trade partner. True, Romania's contacts with the German leadership showed that Berlin's demands go much further than the

steps that Bucharest was ready to take. At the same time, another association arose in the Balkans aimed at maintaining the territorial status quo - the Balkan Entente, of which Romania became a member. Under these conditions, Romania, with the support of Poland, agreed to

sign the convention proposed by the Soviet side on the definition of the aggressor. This document was considered in Bucharest as Moscow's tacit consent to the annexation of Bessarabia to Romania, but the Soviet side again publicly declared its position on the Bessarabian issue. In the meantime, France initiated negotiations on problems of common European security. For its part, Moscow supported this French idea, and from the end of 1933 the policy of "collective security" became the foreign policy strategy of the USSR. The start of negotiations on the Eastern Pact showed the interest of a number of Eastern European countries, including Romania, in obtaining additional guarantees of their security. Franco-Soviet rapprochement and negotiations on the Eastern Pact pushed Romania to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The Romanian leadership again tried to use this fact to propagate the version that the Soviet side recognized the border along the Dniester, but, of course, no change in the Soviet position on this issue did not

followed.

In the second half of the 1930s, it became obvious that England and France, which had taken a course of appeasing Germany, actually abandoned the protection of their interests in Eastern Europe. Naturally, the trend towards maneuvering in the international arena has intensified in Romanian politics. Considering the preservation of existing borders as its main task, Romania hoped that it would be able to add to the allied obligations under the Little and Balkan Entente, which guaranteed the containment of Hungary and Bulgaria, also border guarantee agreements with the USSR, and then with Germany. In Bucharest, it was believed that the creation of a Franco-Czechoslovak-Soviet alliance represented a convenient opportunity for an agreement with the USSR, but they did not intend to irritate Germany there either. Accordingly, in the summer of 1935, the Romanian side tried to interest the USSR in a mutual assistance treaty in exchange for Soviet recognition of the annexation of Bessarabia. However, Moscow did not have confidence in Romanian foreign policy and was not going to make such a concession. As a result, the negotiations ended in vain. Since the autumn of 1936, Romanian policy has become more and more oriented towards Poland and Germany.

Table 10

Share of countries in foreign trade of Romania (%)1066

Страна		1929	1936	1937	1938	1939
Германия	Экспорт	27,6	17,8	19,2	26,5	32,3
	Импорт	24,1	36,1	28,9	36,8	39,3
	Оборот	25,8	24,5	23	31,3	35,5
Англия	Экспорт	6,3	14,4	8,8	11,1	14,1
	Импорт	7,3	7,4	9,4	8,1	5,9
	Оборот	6,9	11,8	9	9,7	10,3
Франция	Экспорт	4,5	8,1	5,7	4,7	3,4
	Импорт	5,5	5,9	6,1	7,7	8,2
	Оборот	5	7,3	5,9	6,1	5,6
Италия	Экспорт	7,7	6,1	6,6	6,2	12,1
	Импорт	6,9	1,6	4,3	5	8,8
	Оборот	7,3	4,4	5,7	5,6	10,6
Чехословакия	Экспорт	6,2	7	8,2	9,6	10,9
	Импорт	13,6	11,5	16,1	13,1	16,8
	Оборот	9,9	8,7	11,3	11,2	13,6

The events of the Czechoslovak crisis in 1938 showed that Bucharest, bound by an alliance with Prague, was not going to support its ally against Germany. The Romanian leadership carefully monitored changes in the international arena and tried not to irritate either England with France, or Germany with Italy. Knowing full well the unwillingness of Western countries, and even more so of Germany, to allow Soviet intervention in the solution of the Sudeten question, Romania took a generally negative position regarding the issue of allowing Soviet troops to help Czechoslovakia. True, a formal statement about the Romanian position was never made, but the contradictory statements of Romanian diplomats in European capitals generally boiled down to refusing to allow the Red Army to pass. As a result of the separation of the Sudetenland from Czechoslovakia, the Little Entente practically ceased to exist. Continuing to make economic concessions to Germany, Romania tried to preserve the possibility of maneuver in its foreign policy. Refusing to rapprochement with the USSR, Romania in late 1938 - early

1939 decided to seek support from England and France, but it quickly became clear that these countries did not really intend to support Bucharest. Under these conditions, it was necessary not to aggravate relations with Germany, which gradually increased its influence in the Balkans. In March 1939, the Romanian leadership tried once again to probe the positions of London and Paris regarding possible economic concessions to Berlin. Since these soundings coincided with the German occupation of the Czech Republic, Romania unexpectedly found itself drawn into the European pre-war crisis. England's proposals to involve the USSR in the defense of Romania

caused at least discontent in Bucharest. As V.K. Volkov, by the spring of 1939, the small countries of South-Eastern Europe developed their own version of the strategy of "appeasement" of the aggressor, which consisted in a resolute refusal "from contacts with the Soviet Union in their foreign policy" and "from participating in any kind of international cooperation, even remotely resembling a system of collective security"¹⁰⁶⁷. On March 23, the Romanian-German economic agreement was signed, which expanded the German economic presence in Romania. Trying to keep Romania from rapprochement with Germany, England and France on April 13 gave her guarantees of independence. True, Bucharest was not slow to inform Berlin of its readiness to cooperate with Germany. Table 11 **Share of some European powers in Romanian oil exports**

(thousand tons)¹⁰⁶⁸

	1938 г.		1939 г.	
Англия	540,4	12%	625,2	15%
Франция	189,3	4,2%	238,1	5,7%
Германия	704,2	15,7%	848,6	20,3%
Италия	556,5	12,4%	634,9	15,2%
Чехословакия	249,9	5,6%	436,6	10,4%

During the political crisis of 1939 in Europe, the situation for the Soviet Union was not very favorable. On the one hand, both Britain and France and Germany showed a desire for an agreement with it, but, on the other hand, the danger of a new Anglo-French-German agreement, following the example of 1938, was by no means excluded. This was also confirmed by the position of Romania, which, being an ally of England and France, did not want rapprochement with Moscow, confirming its foreign policy imperative - any agreement with the USSR should first of all lead to Soviet agreement with the border along the Dniester. In general, the position of Romania was reduced to the formula: "No alliances against Germany and no business with the USSR." At the same time, Moscow got the opportunity to choose with whom and on what terms to negotiate, and used it to the maximum, balancing between the Anglo-French and German-Italian military-political blocs.

The international relations of the spring-summer of 1939 in Europe were a tangled tangle of diplomatic activities of the great powers, each of which sought to achieve its own goals. Events developed in parallel in several directions: there were covert and overt Anglo-French-Soviet, Anglo-German and Soviet-German negotiations, an Anglo-French-Polish and German-Italian coalition was taking shape. Moscow in its calculations proceeded from the fact that the outbreak of war in Europe - both with the participation of the USSR in the Anglo-French bloc, and while maintaining its neutrality - opened up new prospects for strengthening Soviet influence on the continent. An alliance with England and France would make Moscow an equal partner with all the ensuing consequences, and the Soviet Union's neutrality in the face of the weakening of both belligerents would allow it to take the position of a kind of arbiter on which the outcome of the war depends. Based on such calculations, the Soviet foreign policy course was determined.

The Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations showed that Britain and France were not ready for equal partnership with the USSR. Under these conditions, Germany's proposals turned out to be more attractive, and on August 23, 1939, a Soviet-German non-aggression pact was signed in Moscow, which became a significant success for Soviet diplomacy. According to the secret additional protocol to this treaty, the Soviet side emphasized its interest in Bessarabia, while the German side declared "its political disinterest in these areas"¹⁰⁶⁹. Thus, the USSR was able to achieve recognition of its position on the Bessarabian issue by Germany. As a result of this agreement, the USSR managed to stay out of the European war, while receiving a certain freedom of hands in Eastern Europe and more room for maneuver between the warring factions in their own interests. In 1939, Europe was split into three military-political camps: Anglo-French, German-Italian and Soviet, each of which sought to achieve its own goals, which could not but lead to war.

At present, the official position of Romanian historiography on the question of the Soviet-German agreement on non-aggression of 1939 boils down to the

following: "By signing the secret Protocol, the USSR violated with respect to

Romania: article 1 of the Briand-Kellogg Pact, which condemns the use of war in the settlement of international conflicts and provides for the rejection of war as an instrument of national policy in relations between participating states;

article 2 of the same Covenant, which provides that the settlement or settlement of all disputes and conflicts of any origin that may arise between States Parties should be carried out exclusively by peaceful means; The Moscow Protocol of February 9, 1929,

according to which the states that signed it: the USSR, Estonia, Poland, Latvia and Romania - accelerated the Briand-Kellogg Pact;

the decision of the London Convention on the definition of the aggressor, signed in 1933 by Romania, Estonia, Poland, Turkey and the USSR"¹⁰⁷⁰.

However, all these loud accusations of the Soviet Union are completely unfounded, since neither the non-aggression pact nor the secret protocol to it mention the possibility of any military actions by Moscow in order to implement the achieved Soviet-German agreements. In addition, it should be remembered that it was this agreement between Berlin and Moscow that made it possible to peacefully resolve the Bessarabian issue in the summer of 1940. In addition, new versions appear. Thus, the Romanian researcher V. Veratik believes that, under the Soviet-German agreement, "the Soviet Union undertook to put forward its claims to Bessarabia only when the Romanian government would begin to satisfy possible Hungarian or Bulgarian territorial requirements." However, the quotations from the documents he cites show that, although the German side really tried to bind Moscow with additional conditions, the Soviet leadership skillfully evaded their acceptance (*Veratik V. Decree. op. pp. 532-533, 539*).

Having achieved its interests in Eastern Europe thanks to the non-aggression pact, the Soviet Union closely followed the development of events, preparing to use them to its advantage. The beginning of the war in Europe and the passive position of England and France, which had the opportunity to defeat Germany already in September 1939, allowed the USSR to intensify its policy towards the Eastern European countries and begin to revise its western borders imposed on it in 1920–1921. Thus, the Soviet leadership was able to regain control over the territories, most of which had previously been part of the Russian Empire. Already in September-October 1939, Moscow managed to return the territories of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus lost in 1921 and set up military bases in the Baltic countries. The military and diplomatic successes of the USSR in establishing control over the Soviet sphere of interests in Eastern Europe were interrupted by Finland, and throughout the winter of 1939-1940. Moscow was busy with the war in the northwest, which greatly increased the threat of clashes with England and France. Only the defeat of France in June 1940 allowed the Soviet leadership to intensify its policy in the Baltic states and towards Romania.

Not being sure of the victory of one or another European grouping, the Romanian leadership decided to wait, and literally on the eve of the start of the German-Polish war, Romania assured Germany that it would remain neutral in the event of a war in Europe and continue to supply the Third Reich with oil and food. Bucharest was not going to rush to the defense of his Polish ally and wanted to make sure that London and Paris were ready for war. The passivity of Britain and France in the war with Germany began already from the end of 1939 to push Romania towards a more careful consideration of the wishes of Berlin. Believing that it was the Third Reich that could become a new defender against possible Soviet claims, the Romanian leadership, which closely followed the course of the European war, decided from April 1940 to intensify rapprochement with Germany. The position of Romania was further complicated by the fact that Hungary, which had long since taken a course towards rapprochement with Germany, and Bulgaria had certain territorial claims against it. Under these conditions, new economic concessions to Germany were considered in Bucharest as an opportunity to enlist its support not only against Moscow, but also against Budapest and Sofia¹⁰⁷¹.

In the conditions of the defeat of France and the support of the Soviet position on the Bessarabian issue by Germany and Italy, Moscow was able to resolve this protracted dispute from a position of strength. Having concentrated a significant military grouping on the Dniester, the USSR demanded that Romania finally fulfill the obligations assumed back in 1918 and withdraw Romanian troops from occupied Bessarabia. At the same time, it was required to transfer to the Soviet Union and Northern Bukovina, populated mainly by Ukrainians and of great strategic importance (a railway connecting Bessarabia and Western Ukraine ran through it). Deprived of any external support, Romania was forced to agree to Soviet demands. As the former Romanian Prime Minister Tatarescu wrote in 1943: "We abandoned the war with the Soviets, because this meant not only the disappearance of the Romanian state and the defeat of our army, but also the liquidation of the entire Romanian ruling class with all the ensuing consequences"¹⁰⁷². As a result, the Soviet leadership managed to achieve an end to the Romanian intervention that had dragged on for 22 years, and the Bessarabian issue was finally resolved peacefully. Historiography has repeatedly raised the question of whether

the Soviet notes to Romania on June 26 and 27, 1940 were ultimatums. As a rule, Soviet historians tried to avoid this issue, while foreign historians, on the contrary, focused their attention on it. To resolve this issue, it should be recalled that an ultimatum is "a demand from one state to another, accompanied by a threat to use force if it is not fulfilled within a specified period." Turning to the texts of the Soviet notes, one can see that although they did not directly mention the threat of the use of force, they contained hints of the possibility of such a development of events. All this makes it possible to evaluate the Soviet demands precisely as an ultimatum, which, by the way, was not hidden at all at that time¹⁰⁷³. But before following some authors¹⁰⁷⁴ to condemn these methods of Moscow, it should be remembered that the ultimatum is one of the most common methods of foreign policy in general. Especially when it comes to the relationship between a major power and a small state. Moreover, frankly speaking, there was simply no other way to resolve the Bessarabian issue in the real conditions of the summer of 1940.

It is clear that Romania considered these Soviet actions a "seizure", the same thesis was widely disseminated in the anti-Soviet literature of the post-war period. Oddly enough, now it is also voiced in Russian historiography. So, for example, E.L. Valeva writes that the territory of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina "was

occupied by Germany's ally - the USSR"1075. Not only did the author completely distort the current situation, she also managed to declare the Soviet Union an ally of the Third Reich. It would be interesting to hear her arguments in favor of this absolutely unsubstantiated statement, but now it is not customary to give arguments on some issues. However, in this case it should be noted that there was no question of any Soviet-German alliance. Not a single agreement of the parties says a word about this, neither Moscow nor Berlin have ever considered their relations in this vein, although they allowed such propaganda statements that could be interpreted as a certain tendency for further rapprochement between them. However, things did not go further than this.

As for the Soviet "occupation" of these territories, as the American journalist W. Maxwell wrote in the hot pursuit of the events, "despite the fact that there were attempts in the press to characterize this event as a territorial "seizure," three main factors must be taken into account. Firstly, the occupation of Bessarabia by Romania was a seizure, and the Soviet government never recognized the rights of Romania to this territory, secondly, under the Romanian domination, the population of Bessarabia was in a difficult situation, and thirdly, these events were enthusiastically received by the inhabitants of Bessarabia. [...] "Regarding the first of these three factors, it should be noted that the seizure of Bessarabia by Romania in 1918 was so blatant that the US government never officially recognized it and did not include Bessarabia as Romanian territory in its maps until 1931." [...] "From the events in eastern Poland, the Baltic countries, and now in Bessarabia and Bukovina, it is clear what the common people of the small tyrannized countries of Europe associate their hopes for freedom and well-being with the opportunity to make their choice." Therefore, "it is not surprising that the hospitality extended to the Red Army was very warm. When the first pontoons were built on the Dniester by the Red Army, the Bessarabian peasants sailed and waded to the boats to send them to a safe place. In the villages and along the roads, the Red Army was greeted with exclamations: "We have been waiting for you for 22 years!" 1076

Were these actions of the USSR aggression? According to the 1933 convention on the definition of aggression, proposed precisely by the Soviet side, the aggressor was the one who made "a declaration of war on another state; the invasion of its armed forces, even without a declaration of war, on the territory of another state; an attack by its land, sea or air forces, even without a declaration of war, on the territory, ships or aircraft of another state; sea blockade of coasts or ports of another state; support given to armed bands which, having been formed on its territory, would invade the territory of another state, or the refusal, despite the demand of the invaded state, to take, in its own territory, all measures in its power to deprive said bands of all assistance, or patronage." Moreover, the convention specifically stipulated that "no consideration of a political, military, economic or other order can justify aggression" (including the internal system and its shortcomings; unrest caused by strikes, revolutions, counter-revolutions or civil war; violation of the interests of another state ; rupture of diplomatic and economic relations; economic or financial blockade; disputes, including territorial and border incidents)1077 .

First of all, it should be noted that the application of the term "Soviet aggression" to the territory of Bessarabia occupied by Romania is simply impossible. Even if the Soviet side had committed the actions specified in the convention, they should have been qualified as measures to curb Romanian aggression and liberate Soviet territory. As for Northern Bukovina, since the entry of Soviet troops into its territory was preceded by diplomatic negotiations that ended with the Romanian side agreeing with the Soviet version of the solution to the Bessarabian issue, from a legal point of view, Moscow's actions are not aggression.

As a result of the actions of the Soviet Union in June 1940, the Soviet-Romanian border along the Prut and Danube rivers, established by the decision of the Berlin Congress of 1878, was **restored** . Bessarabia was **liberated** from the Romanian occupation and **reunited** with the USSR. As for Northern Bukovina, in this case, this territory was **annexed** to the USSR and **a new border was established** between the Prut and the Carpathians. In international legal terms, the Soviet-Romanian border, established by the agreement of June 28, 1940, was secured by a peace treaty with Romania signed on February 10, 1947. 1078 Thus, the Soviet leadership succeeded not only in fact, but also in legal settlement of the Bessarabian issue.

The defeat of France in June 1940 led to the disruption of the established system of influence of the great powers and intensified the struggle for the Balkans. The USSR was the first to use the new situation, achieving a resolution of the Bessarabian issue. Hungary and Bulgaria decided that the time had come to exercise their own territorial claims against Romania. Fearing its neighbors, the Romanian leadership decided to accelerate the rapprochement with Germany, which was supposed to help avoid new territorial concessions. Already on June 29, the Romanian leadership decided that rapprochement with the USSR was impossible, since "it would lead us with quick steps towards communism." Consequently, there remained only a course towards rapprochement with Germany, and the participation of Romania in a possible attack of the Third Reich on the Soviet Union was not excluded. On the same day, the German envoy in Bucharest was informed of the readiness of the Romanian government to "get rid of the erroneous

policy of the past"1079 . Referring to the fact that England did not even provide her indirect support in the Bessarabian is

July 1939 refused the Anglo-French guarantees. Indeed, busy with ensuring their own security after the capitulation of France, the British government reacted neutrally to the actions of the USSR in relation to Romania¹⁰⁸⁰. According to the British press, the "occupation" of Bessarabia was the beginning of the war in the Balkans, and the exit of the Red Army to the Danube indicates the beginning of the collapse of Soviet-German friendship, since Germany could lose Romanian oil. Newspapers published rumors that the Russians were making claims on the Romanian ports and intended to seize the Dardanelles. On July 5, TASS refuted the report of a number of English newspapers that allegedly on July 2 a Moscow radio station broadcast an appeal of the Romanian population to the Red Army for help against "the great power that the Romanian government turned to"¹⁰⁸². With these measures, the British leadership sought to worsen Soviet-German relations in order to divert Berlin's attention to the east.

On July 2, in a personal message to Hitler, Karol II declared his desire for "close cooperation with Germany in all areas, the conclusion of political agreements favorable to both countries", and asked to send a military mission to Bucharest¹⁰⁸³. However, Berlin was in no hurry to respond to the Romanian proposals, since Germany was faced with the task of subordinating all the Balkans to its influence, and for this it was necessary to use the contradictions of the countries of the region. Already on July 4, German diplomats informed the Romanian leadership of the need for territorial concessions to Hungary and Bulgaria. On July 6, the Romanian king reported to Berlin that he was ready to negotiate with his neighbors and expressed the hope that "this sincere statement, which demands colossal sacrifices from Romania, will be considered as proof of the spirit of cooperation and his personal high appreciation of the Fuhrer." On July 12, Romania announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations and asked Germany to send troops to the country to "train" the Romanian army¹⁰⁸⁴. During July 1940, British and French specialists who worked in the oil fields were expelled from Romania, the largest British oil company, Astra Romany, came under the control of the

Romanian government. It is clear that all these pro-German gestures of Bucharest aroused concern in Hungary, which feared that by drawing closer to Germany, Romania would be able to enlist its support in the Transylvanian issue. However, the German leadership did not seek to take a pro-Romanian or Pro-Hungarian position, since it was interested in subordinating both states. Therefore, from the point of view of Berlin, the best policy would be to create a situation in which both Hungary and Romania would be forced to constantly turn to the Third Reich for support. On July 15, Hitler's personal message was sent to Bucharest, in which the condition for the German-Romanian rapprochement was the satisfaction of the territorial demands of Hungary and Bulgaria. "If Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria," wrote the Fuhrer, "consider it impossible to reach an agreement, then such a position, in my firm opinion, will not benefit any of these states, but, on the contrary, will punish them all"¹⁰⁸⁵. In fact, this was a threat primarily against Romania.

The demonstrative coldness of Berlin pushed the Romanian leadership to new concessions. During the negotiations with Germany and Italy on July 26-27, the Romanian delegation, recalling its pro-German actions in previous years, tried to achieve a softening of the German-Italian position. At the same time, she expressed her readiness to normalize relations with Hungary and Bulgaria by changing the border and exchanging populations. In exchange, Romania asked Germany and Italy to provide territorial guarantees and issue a loan for the purchase of German weapons within 10 years. "Romania is ready to make concessions, because she clearly understands her position and knows about the desires of the Fuhrer to establish a new order in Europe, of which she wants to become a part." However, Germany and Italy refused the Romanian proposal to guarantee the borders of Romania and the role of an arbitrator in the settlement of territorial issues, demanding that she negotiate with her neighbors, taking into account their requirements. On August 8, a new commercial Romanian-German agreement was signed for the supply of agricultural products. Under these conditions, in August 1940, Romania was forced to enter into

direct negotiations with Hungary and Bulgaria¹⁰⁸⁶. In July 1940, Germany, Italy and the USSR, seeking to strengthen, and England, trying to maintain its influence in the region, supported the territorial claims of Bulgaria to Romania. On August 19-21, Romanian-Bulgarian negotiations took place in the city of Craiova, as a result of which an agreement was signed on September 7 on the transfer of the territory of Southern Dobrudja with an area of 5,672 square meters to Bulgaria. km and a population of 386,231 people. On September 21, the agreement was ratified, and the Bulgarian troops entered South Dobruja, and by October 2, the whole procedure was completed¹⁰⁸⁷. For its part, Hungary informed Berlin as early as June 28 that in the current situation it did not exclude the possibility of resolving the issue of Transylvania by military force. At the same time she is ready to increase her agricultural supplies to Germany and give her the right to use the Hungarian railways. On June 29, Hungarian troops began to concentrate near the Romanian border¹⁰⁸⁸.

At the same time, Hungary tried to find out the position of other great powers. In July-August 1940, Moscow repeatedly stated that it considered its relations with Hungary to be normal and had no claims against it. At the same time, "the Soviet government believes that Hungary's claims to Romania are justified," and the USSR will adhere to this position "in the event that an international conference is convened, at which the question of Hungary's claims to Romania will eventually be raised." Hungarian attempts to obtain promises of more specific assistance have not been successful¹⁰⁸⁹. England and the USA also supported the Hungarian claims. Behind this position of Moscow, London and Washington, one could easily guess the desire to use the Hungarian-Romanian

Germany's allies and cause her economic hardship. For their part, Germany and Italy, noting the validity of the Hungarian claims, at the beginning of July 1940 advised Hungary to refrain from the use of force and try to resolve the issue through diplomacy. Contacts with Hungary, which

began on the initiative of Romania on August 7, developed on August 16 into direct negotiations in the city of Turnu Severin. However, the cardinal divergence of the positions of the parties and the absence of even a hint of mutual concessions led to the fact that on August 24 the negotiations finally failed, and in Budapest they decided to start a war with Romania on the morning of August 29. On August 23, mobilization began in Hungary; on August 27, an air battle took place between the aircraft of the parties on the Hungarian-Romanian border. On the same day, Hungary notified Germany that the breakdown of negotiations and the concentration of the Romanian army in Transylvania forced her to consider the possibility of a military solution to the issue. The next day, the Hungarian Air Force bombed the Romanian airfield, and the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Hungarian armies deployed on the border (with a total of 360 thousand people) were

ready for the offensive¹⁰⁹⁰. Naturally, Berlin was not going to allow a Hungarian-Romanian conflict. On August 27, Germany invited Hungary and Romania to send their representatives to a conference in Vienna. On August 28, the 4th Panzer and 2nd Motorized Divisions of the Wehrmacht were put on alert "in order to quickly intervene to protect the Romanian oil regions." It was assumed that this operation would be carried out on August 31 - September 1, 1940¹⁰⁹¹. However, on the same day in Berlin, it became known that Romania agreed to international arbitration. On August 29, in Vienna, the delegations of Hungary and Romania were informed of the need to maintain peace and the readiness of Germany and Italy to resolve the controversial issue. The next day, the decision of the Second Vienna Arbitration was issued, according to which the territory of Northern Transylvania with an area of 43,492 square meters was transferred to Hungary. km with a population of 2,667 thousand people, and Romania received a guarantee of its new borders. Such a solution to the Transylvanian issue suited Germany to the greatest extent, which, having promised the parties the possibility of revising it, received additional leverage on bo

The population of Romania reacted with indignation to reports of the Vienna dictatorship, and protest rallies and demonstrations took place in a number of cities. To calm public opinion, the Romanian leadership used the facts of incidents on the Soviet-Romanian border, inflating the version of the Soviet threat, which forced the decision of the Vienna Arbitration. The situation on the Soviet-Romanian border from the second half of July 1940 began to deteriorate, which was associated with an increase in the number of its violations from the Romanian side. From July 16 to July 31, Romanian aircraft violated Soviet airspace 13 times, and the land border was violated 13 times by Romanian soldiers from July 8 to 30, of which 17 were detained by Soviet border guards, and 1 was killed while resisting. Romanian soldiers spoiled or rearranged milestones marking the border line, fired at Soviet border guards. In August, the situation worsened even more, and the number of border violations increased. At this time, Romanian aircraft invaded the airspace of the USSR 17 times, and on August 26, 9 Romanian aircraft that violated the border were attacked by 2 Soviet fighters. In the air battle that took place, 1 Romanian aircraft was shot down, and the rest flew over the river. Prut¹⁰⁹³.

Under these conditions, on August 17, Moscow protested to Bucharest against these incidents and proposed the creation of a mixed Soviet-Romanian commission to demarcate the border. On August 19, the Soviet Union handed over to Romania a new note of protest against the actions of the Romanian troops on the border. A Romanian reply dated August 26 reported that the Romanian border guards had received strict orders to avoid any incidents, and counter-claims were put forward against the actions of the Soviet border guard. On August 29 and September 12, Moscow again protested against new incidents provoked by the Romanian side¹⁰⁹⁴. Only by the end of September 1940 did the situation on the border somewhat normalize, but continued to be difficult¹⁰⁹⁵. To substantiate the version of the Soviet threat to Romania, the fact of the signing of the Soviet-Hungarian treaty on trade and navigation on September 3, which was considered in Bucharest as the basis of a possible anti-Romanian Soviet-Hungarian alliance, was also used. True, it should be noted that no military measures against Romania were planned by the Soviet side at that time.

Revealing the meaning of these border provocations, Pravda rightly wrote on September 9 that "Karol's entourage was negotiating a few times ago, in which preparations were made for the transfer of a significant part of Transylvania to Hungary, as well as receiving guarantees from Germany and Italy for the state territory of Romania. The king needed some external reason in order to somehow justify these decisions that were being prepared before the public opinion of Romania. For these purposes, the king's entourage went to create provocative incidents on the Soviet-Romanian border. Karol, of course, correctly calculated that the attacks of the Romanian units on the Soviet border guard could not go unanswered. All this was used to spread deliberately false rumors that the Soviet Union was allegedly preparing an attack on Romania, that Romania was threatened with a military defeat, and therefore the only way to save Romania was to give Hungary part of Transylvania and receive guarantees from Germany and Italy for the territory of Romania »¹⁰⁹⁶. The changed situation in the Balkans demanded

that the tactics of the local communist parties be clarified. Already on August 20, 1940, the ECCI approved a resolution on the situation in Hungary and the tasks of the CPV, according to which the main threat was the rapprochement of Hungary with Germany on the basis of a revision of the Hungarian borders. Before the Hungarian Com

the task was to fight for an independent foreign policy of the country and the preservation of peace, which was possible only on the basis of "good-neighborly, honest and unconditionally friendly relations with the great neighboring socialist power, the Soviet Union"¹⁰⁹⁷. On September 5, 1940, the ECCI worked out a directive to the Romanian and Hungarian Communist Parties on the Transylvanian question, in which the Vienna Arbitration was directly called an imperialist diktat. The Communist Parties were tasked with intensifying their struggle against the reactionary ruling regimes, for the proletarian solidarity of the working people of both countries, and for

rapprochement with the USSR. The Romanian delegation that arrived in Moscow on September 9, 1940 to negotiate the demarcation of the border line tried again to raise the issue of changing the border in the area of the city of Herts, but the Soviet side rejected this proposal¹⁰⁹⁹. In the future, the work of the demarcation commission was hampered in every possible way by the Romanian side, which did not want to recognize this line as a border. For this, differences were used on the issue of the boundary line in the Hertz region and especially in the Danube delta, where it was not established which of the several branches of the Kiliya gorge should be the border¹¹⁰⁰. This made it possible to assert that the "seizure of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina" was an act of force, which Romania "has no interest in legalizing" and giving the "Councils a legal basis for holding these provinces"¹¹⁰¹. As a result, until June 22, 1941, the Soviet-Romanian border was never demarcated, which contributed to the emergence of new incidents. Subsequently, Soviet notes of protest about the facts of shelling of Soviet border guards and violation of the border by Romanian aircraft were sent to the Romanian side on January 18, 21, February 22, March 21, 31, April 12, 26, May 5, 9, 19, 1941. Only from 10 to 21 June 1941 foreign planes violated the border of the USSR from Romania ¹¹⁰² 17 times.

Meanwhile, on September 5, 1940, the Romanian constitution of 1938 was repealed, on September 6, King Carol II abdicated in favor of his son Mihai I, and on September 4, General I. Antonescu, who became the head of the Romanian government, received de facto dictatorial powers. The new Romanian leadership decided to speed up rapprochement with Germany, and on September 5, the new head of government notified Berlin of "the desire for close cooperation with Germany", consent to send a military mission, readiness to comply with the decisions of the Vienna Arbitration and increase the supply of necessary goods to the Third Reich. On September 13, a request was sent to Berlin, with reference, among other things, to the "Soviet threat" to send a military mission to Romania¹¹⁰³. On September 20, the Supreme High Command of the Wehrmacht (OKW) issued an order to send troops to Romania to protect the oil fields and train the Romanian army. On October 8, German troops arrived in Romania with a total number of 22,430 people *Pokivailova T.A.* Decree. op. pp. 69–71; *Shevyakov A.A.* Decree. op. pp. 101–104; *Kolker B.M., Levit I.E.* Decree. op. pp. 138–147; *Levit I.E.* Decree. op. pp. 106–113; *Müller-Hillebrand B.* Land Army of Germany 1933-1945. Per. with him. T. 2. M., 1958. S. 149, 152; Eastern Europe between Hitler and Stalin. pp. 359–361. The number of German troops in Romania was constantly growing: in January 1941, there were already 60,404 people in them, in February - 367,744, and in April 1941 - 750 thousand people. (*Eliberarea Basarabiei si a Nordului Bucovinei*. P. 39). On October 16, the USSR announced that it had not been informed about the goals and the number of German troops in Romania, which on the same day agreed to join the Tripartite Pact. The Soviet Union failed to establish economic cooperation with Romania due to the reluctance of Bucharest and the predominant economic influence of Germany. However, in order not to worsen the already cold Soviet-Romanian relations, the Romanian leadership in December 1940 agreed to start economic negotiations, which ended on February 26, 1941 with the signing of an agreement on trade and navigation and an agreement on trade and payments, but this did not affect on the anti-Soviet position of Romania¹¹⁰⁴.

The decisions of the Vienna Arbitration caused dissatisfaction in Moscow, and in the course of lively diplomatic contacts with Germany on this issue, the Soviet side pointed to Berlin's violation of Article 3 of the non-aggression agreement on consultations. In response, the German government stated that its actions "with respect to Romania and Hungary were aimed at maintaining peace in the Danube region, which was seriously threatened by the tensions between the two countries, which was possible only with quick diplomatic intervention", so there was no time left to notify Moscow. The entry of German troops into Romania was explained by the need to help train the Romanian army and protect oil sources from possible actions of England¹¹⁰⁵. Diplomatic discussions on these issues led to the fact that on September 19, 1940, Hitler "decided not to grant Russia any more European area"¹¹⁰⁶.

The strengthening of German and the weakening of English influence in the Balkans led to the fact that, at the initiative of Germany, a meeting of experts was convened to determine the mode of navigation on the Danube, bypassing the existing Danube commissions. Not being invited to this meeting, the USSR on September 9 turned to Germany with a notification of its interest in its work. Germany tried to reject the Soviet claims, referring to the fact that the upcoming meeting intends to focus on the issue of shipping in the Iron Gate area. In this spirit, the official response from Berlin on September 12 was also sustained, in which it was noted that Germany takes "the accession of the USSR to the European Danube Commission ... for granted." This answer did not satisfy Moscow, and on September 13, a message was published in the press that the USSR "hopes to receive relevant information from the German government about the meeting of experts in Vienna on international Danube issues"¹¹⁰⁷. On September 14, the Soviet side declared that it approved of the liquidation of the International and European Danube Commissions and was in favor of

the creation of a new Danube Commission and is interested in resolving issues of navigation on the Danube from Bratislava to its mouth¹¹⁰⁸.

On October 13, Germany promised to take into account Soviet wishes in matters of the Danube regime, and on October 17 notified the USSR of its agreement with its proposal "on the formation of a single Danube Commission, but considers it necessary for Italy to participate in this commission." The Soviet side indicated the need to discuss this issue, and on October 19 expressed its readiness "to join the Interim Agreement of September 12, 1940, pending the formation of the said Danube Commission." and "to take part in joint negotiations between the authorized experts of the USSR, Germany, Romania and Italy in Bucharest to consider, as an interim solution, those tasks that have been carried out by the European Danube Commission so far"¹¹⁰⁹. Accordingly, on October 24, the Soviet delegation received the task of ensuring that instead of the Autonomous Romanian Directorate of the Maritime Danube, the Soviet-Romanian Administration of the Maritime Danube was created in the city of Sulina, which should be entrusted with establishing the rules of navigation from Braila to the Black Sea. The Romanian side could organize a pilotage service in the Sulinsky and Georgievsky branches, and in the Kiliya branch the USSR and Romania would act jointly. It was supposed to achieve a ban on navigation in the sea Danube of all military ships, except for Romania and the USSR, and the transit of weapons would be possible only with the joint permission of Moscow and Bucharest¹¹¹⁰. However, the negotiations that began on October 28 showed that Romania, with the tacit consent of Germany and Italy, took an uncompromising position regarding the proposals of the USSR. As a result, on December 21, 1940, fruitless negotiations were postponed indefinitely¹¹¹¹. For its part, the Soviet leadership, dissatisfied with the rapprochement of Hungary and Romania with Germany, which created a barrier

to Soviet penetration into the Balkans, decided to discuss the Balkan problems at the upcoming negotiations with Germany in Berlin. Thus, in the directives of the Soviet delegation dated November 9, 1940, it was envisaged to achieve during the negotiations that in the Balkans "the region of the mouth of the Danube and Bulgaria were assigned to the sphere of interests of the USSR." It was also necessary "to say about our dissatisfaction with the fact that Germany and Italy did not consult with the USSR on the issue of guarantees and the introduction of troops into Romania" and to declare their interest in the further fate of Hungary, Romania and Turkey and the need for Soviet participation in resolving these issues¹¹¹². During negotiations in Berlin on November 12–13, Molotov told Hitler that "The Soviet government expressed its dissatisfaction with the fact that, without consulting it, Germany and Italy guaranteed the inviolability of the Romanian territory. He believes that these guarantees were directed against the interests of the Soviet Union. Hitler replied that "Germany does not consider it possible for a certain time to refuse these guarantees", which "were the only thing that persuaded Romania to cede Bessarabia to Russia without a fight", drew the interlocutor's attention to the economic importance of the Romanian oil reserves for Germany and Italy and noted that "The Romanian government itself asked Germany to take over" the defense of the oil-bearing regions from England for the duration of the war¹¹¹³. As a result, it became obvious that Germany received an important military and economic foothold in Romania and did not intend to make any concessions. Meanwhile, the activation of England in the Eastern Mediterranean demanded from Germany the creation of guarantees for the security of the oil-bearing regions of Ploiesti and

military security in the region. Under these conditions, the importance of the peaceful expansion of Germany in the Balkans, which sought to consolidate the Balkan countries in the interests of the struggle against England, and in the future against the USSR, increased. Not only bilateral agreements, but also the Tripartite Pact, a military-political treaty of Germany, Italy and Japan, concluded on September 27, 1940, to which Hungary joined on November 20, should have become an instrument for subordinating the Balkan states. During a visit to Berlin on November 22–23, Antonescu declared to Hitler that in the event of a war with the USSR, he was ready to take part in it in alliance with Germany. On November 23, Romania joined the Tripartite Pact, finally becoming a satellite of the Third Reich¹¹¹⁴. On December 4, the "Protocol on German-Romanian cooperation for the implementation of the ten-year plan for the development of the Romanian economy" was signed, which was now completely subordinate to the needs of Germany, its military preparations. If in 1940 the share of the Axis powers in Romanian exports reached 63.6%, then in 1941 it increased to 95.2%¹¹¹⁵. With the help of the clearing system, Berlin was able to pump out raw materials and food from Romania. As early as December 31, 1940, the German trade debt to Romania reached 1,050 million lei, and by the end of 1941 it increased to 17,148 million lei¹¹¹⁶.

Table 12

Oil production and export of oil products by Romania (thousand tons)¹¹¹⁷

Год	Добыча нефти	Экспорт нефтепродуктов	в том числе в Германию	
			всего	в %
1933	7 377	5 886	200	3,4
1934	8 466	6 547	444	6,8
1935	8 376	6 613	863	13,1
1936	8 704	6 885	1 072	15,6
1937	7 150	5 668	435	7,7
1938	6 594	4 495	704,2	15,7
1939	6 226	4 178	848,6	20,3
1940	5 738	3 493	1 147,8	32,8
1941	5 520	4 072	2 714,8	66,7
1942	5 624	3 374	2 163,6	64,1
1943	5 323	3 159	2 511,3	79,5

Informed at the end of December 1940 by the command of the German troops in Romania about the preparation of Germany for war with the USSR, the Romanian leadership on January 14, 1941 offered Berlin the help of its armed forces in the event of a war in the east. The memorandum handed over to the German side stated that "Today Romania is Germany's strategic center and base of political dominance in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. With the development of diplomatic and military events in the spring, Romania may become the center of hostilities. Realizing its role and geographical position, as well as the need to maintain the social European order, Romania is ready for the closest cooperation with Germany. To this end, Romania entered into the Tripartite Pact. She allowed German troops to enter her territory. Romania is ready, if necessary, to join the hostilities on the side of Germany. [...] Resolutely joining any actions of the German side, Romania is convinced that during the forthcoming reconstruction of Europe, it will find full understanding on the part of Germany and the great Fuhrer - a brilliant creator. [...] Being connected with Germany by the Danube, Romania also wishes to have a direct land connection with her in the north and northwest. The document also expressed the hope that "in the new Europe, Germany will recognize the natural role of Romania as a regional hegemon"¹¹¹⁸. This pro-German policy allowed the Antonescu government to get the support of Berlin during the Iron Guard mutiny of January 21–23, 1941.

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On April 10, the Romanian Communist Party received from the ECCI the task of intensifying the struggle against the involvement of Romania in the war and for friendship with the USSR, which was supposed to impede the activities of the government and the actions of Germany¹¹²⁰. For its part, the Romanian leadership on May 10 formulated its territorial claims. In his opinion, the expansion of Romania "can be carried out at the expense of Slovakia ... and also at the expense of Galicia, along the Chernivtsi-Lviv-Krakow line, since it is an easy, direct and short way for communications between the mouth of the Danube and Germany. Based on this, we need not only Bessarabia and Bukovina ... but also Pokuttia, which would expand the common border between Romania, Slovakia and Germany through occupied Poland. South of the Danube, demands were made for the Yugoslav Banat and the Timok region. Naturally, Germany and Italy were in no hurry to determine their position in relation to these projects¹¹²¹. At the end of May 1941, Moscow informed the Romanian government that it was "ready to resolve all territorial issues with Romania and take into account certain wishes regarding the revision [of the borders] if Romania joins the Soviet peace policy", i.e. withdraw from the Tripartite Pact. However, such proposals no longer interested Bucharest.

On June 1, covert mobilization began in Romania, and on June 11-12, during a visit to Munich, Antonescu was officially informed of the upcoming war with the Soviet Union and declared to Hitler that he was ready to act together with Germany. At the same time, the Romanian leadership hoped to get not only Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, but also the territory between the Dniester and the Southern Bug (the so-called Transnistria). In general, this idea was supported by the German side. On June 18, Antonescu was informed of the plan of specific operations of the 11th German army stationed in Romania¹¹²³. On June 22, 1941, without declaring war, Romania, together with Germany, attacked the Soviet Union¹¹²⁴. The Romanian press wrote on August 19, 1942, that "our current struggle is not only a struggle against the Bolsheviks. Until Russia is destroyed, the Russian danger will remain. The destruction of Russia and the advancement of Europe to the Urals is the main condition for the development of the Romanian people. As recognized in 1943 by G.I. Brătianu, "in the war against the USSR, Romania simultaneously found its eastern provinces, which were taken from it in 1940, as well as the meaning of its historical defensive mission on the borders of Europe"¹¹²⁶. Since the idea of Romania's "defensive mission" dates back to the second half of the 19th century, it is quite obvious that it was precisely these aggressive aspirations that pushed her towards an alliance with Germany, and not at all the solution of the Bessarabian issue in the summer of 1940.

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²³¹ Ovseenko V.A. Decree. op. S. 48.

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²³⁴ and Romania. pp. 33–34; Behind the Balkan fronts of the First World War.

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²⁴⁰ 1. D. 12. L. 9. Antonov–Ovseenko V.A. Decree. op. S. 280. 246

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²⁴⁷ Op. 1. D. 38. L. 1. Ibid. F. 103. Op. 1. D.

²⁴⁸ 115. L. 62. Ibid. F. 178. Op. 1. D. 19. L. 56.

²⁴⁹ Antonov–Ovseenko V.A. Decree. op. P.

²⁵⁰ 280. In the book, the first phrase of the telegram begins with the words: “The news is not entirely pleasant ...”, which, apparently, is a misprint.

²⁵¹ Front command directives. T. 2. S. 204. RGVA. F. 103. Op.

²⁵² 1. D. 113. L. 351. Ibid. F. 178. Op. 1. D. 38.

²⁵³ L. 28. Ibid. D. 20. L. 26. Directives of the

²⁵⁴ High Command. P. 236.

²⁵⁵ Fiberboard. T. 2. S. 171–172; Soviet-Romanian

²⁵⁶ relations. T. 1. S. 43–44. Antonov–Ovseenko V.A. Decree. op. P. 281. RGVA. F. 103. Op.

²⁵⁷ 1. D. 115. L. 82. Ibid. F. 178. Op. 1. D. 38. L. 49; F.

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⁸⁸⁶ There. D. 667. L. 160–161; D. 666. L. 89–98; D. 675. L. 64; F. 31983. Op. 2. D. 474. L. 76. No information was found on the strength of the 8th, 17th, 86th rifle divisions, the 49th tank and 214th airborne brigades, as well as complete data on the personnel of the Air Force and rear parts. For the 201st and 204th airborne brigades, information is given only for personnel, and for the 49th tank brigade - only for tanks.

⁸⁸⁷ There. F. 29. Op. 34. D. 548. L. 9–11 rev. As part of the air group of the Southern Front, there were 472 aircraft, in the Air Force of the 12th

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 982 22. There. D. 708. L. 121–
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